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ACCOUNTING FOR HOUSING AND HOMELESS IN 1990 DECENNIAL CENSUS

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HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
CENSUS AND POPULATION

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON
POST OFFICE AND CIVIL SERVICE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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ACCOUNTING FOR HOUSING AND HOMELESS IN 1990 DECENNIAL CENSUS

FRIDAY, APRIL 11, 1986

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CENSUS AND POPULATION,
POST OFFICE AND CIVIL SERVICE COMMITTEE,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 10 a.m., at New York City Hall, Board of Estimates Chamber, New York, NY.

Mr. GARCIA. Good morning and welcome to our hearing on the 1990 decennial: Accounting for housing and the homeless. Joining me is Congressman Gary Ackerman, a member of the Subcommittee on Census and Population.

The 1990 decennial is crucial to the economic and political power of our people. As the source of information for the purpose of political apportionment and the distribution of Federal and State funds, the census figures have a direct effect on the lives of millions of citizens. That is why it is important that each person be counted.

In the past there have been serious problems with the census undercount in large urban areas. The Census Bureau has made a concerted effort to correct this situation, and in the 1980 census we noticed remarkable improvements as far as the undercount is concerned. Nevertheless, the problems of the undercount are bound to become more acute as the census attempts to include the homeless in the 1990 decennial.

The undercount is bound to aggravate the housing crisis as the census figures are used to determine the amount of Federal moneys which are allocated for housing programs. This problem is only compounded by the ever decreasing Federal housing budget which has been cut by 60 percent since 1981.

This particular scenario is largely responsible for the rampant rise in homelessness. A couple of years ago, the Department of Housing and Urban Development commissioned a study to count the homeless in this country. They came up with approximately 350,000 homeless nationwide, a figure which I have no problem in disputing because experts have placed this figure at closer to 2 million homeless.

The reasons for my interest in the undercount, housing and the homeless are quite obvious. These issues are part of everyday life in the south Bronx. They are the bread and butter of my district and for that matter, the bread and butter of this city.

This hearing should provide us with an opportunity to address the issues of housing and homeless as they relate to the 1990 de-

cennial. In doing so, we will be soliciting comments on the adequacy of residency rules in attributing individuals to a particular residence and in dealing with the recent phenomenon of multifamilies sharing a single residence. Additionally, we will ask the witnesses to share their recommendations for the 1990 decennial, particularly as it relates to the counting of the homeless, housing structures, and residency rules.

I would now like to ask my colleague from the city of New York, as well as the Borough of Queens, Gary Ackerman to make his opening statement. Yet, before he makes his statement as a member of the committee, I would just like everybody to know about the time Congressman Ackerman went underground as a homeless person. It was an interesting experience and all of us benefited from it.

As soon as Congressman Ackerman finishes with his opening statement, the mayor of the city of New York will speak and address the committee. Mayor Koch we are delighted that you are here. At the completion of the mayor's testimony we will take a 5-minute recess and then begin with the first panel.

Congressman Ackerman.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you.

I would like to thank my very distinguished colleague, the chairman of the subcommittee, for calling our and the Nation's attention to this most serious of problems. And additionally, for his astuteness in having the hearing here in the city of New York.

Modesty, I think, forbade him from calling your attention to the fact that his concern for the homeless far exceeds the relevancy to the census and to the numbers that the homeless represent. But also additionally to the Federal dollars that might flow to the city of New York and other urban areas if those homeless individuals were properly counted. Moneys that would be very importantly put to use in order to relieve the plight of the homeless.

Chairman Garcia alluded to my experience some years ago in disguising myself as a homeless individual and going through the shelter system in the city of New York. It was an experience that was one of the most traumatic of my life. It was one of the most eye-opening; certainly one of the most humiliating, to see the way these people have been forced to live, to starve in the streets; to go through the shelter system and see the heroic efforts that the city of New York has been making and continues to make in order to make their lives a little bit easier.

Looking at the totality of the picture, it seems to me that the Federal Government has lost its commitment. We are no longer in a period of what one might have once called benign neglect toward the homeless, but rather one of passive homicide where we allow these people to physically die in the gutters of America, but also to allow their hopes and dreams and aspirations as well to wither and to atrophy.

A Federal commitment to housing for the poor and the homeless is nonexistent at this time. The city of New York has been a leader. Certainly there are more dollars spent in this city, I believe, than any other in the Nation for the homeless. And for that, our mayor and his administration must be given much credit.

But nonetheless, there is much to be done and it cannot be done by one city alone, by one administration alone, by one State alone. It has to be a national approach. The homeless, by very definition, are not the problem of any city or any town. It is a national problem and in order to resolve that problem, all of us as citizens of a city, and as citizens of this great Nation, must band together.

And I thank the chairman for his leadership in this area, and in calling this hearing today, which hopefully will focus upon those needs and the goals and the possible solutions.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. GARCIA. Thank you very much.

I just want to take this opportunity to thank Mayor Koch again for being with us today.

STATEMENT OF EDWARD I. KOCH, MAYOR, CITY OF NEW YORK

Mayor KOCH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. It is always a pleasure to welcome old friends to the board of estimate chambers, at city hall. And the two of you are good friends of many, many years standing, and superb Congressmen representing the city of New York and the Nation.

What I would like to do is make a brief statement. The accuracy of the decennial census is important to the city of New York in three major ways. First, to insure its rightful share of Representatives in Congress and the State legislature. Second, to insure its fair share of Federal and State aid, which are frequently driven by population related formulas. And last, to provide city managers with accurate data for the development of policies and programs crucial to our efforts to make the city a better place in which to live.

It is of the utmost importance, therefore, that there be a complete count of all New Yorkers in 1990. The 1980 decennial census procedures were not sufficient to count those living various types of transient accommodations. People staying at very inexpensive hotels, and motels, and so-called flop houses and railroad stations were counted by enumerators. But people living in some noninstitutional group quarters, such as rooming houses and SRO's were counted by using a mail survey. This mail survey method was ineffective for such hard to count groups.

As a consequence, census data on the transient population collected and presented in 1980, did not show the actual number of transient people in localities which should serve them. In remarks later this morning, Commissioner Tony Gleidman of the city's department of housing preservation and development, will review in depth the enumeration methods used in 1980 and will make recommendations for improvements in the counting of the transient population for 1990.

In 1980, commercial hotel and motel rooms which were used by poor individuals and families, not by tourists and business travelers, were not counted, although they have the facilities required to be considered housing units. In many big cities, many inexpensive hotels and motels became viable housing resources as alternative housing choices for poor individuals and families became increasingly rare. The city has some suggestions for dealing with this type

of situation, and I understand that you will get more detail again when you hear Commissioner Tony Gleidman's remarks.

The Census Bureau's own evaluation of the 1980 census estimated that city of New York was undercounted by about 524,000 people. That is an enormous number. That is bigger than San Francisco, I think, and amounts to a rate of 7.4 percent. When I say bigger, I mean as large or bigger than the total population of San Francisco or Boston perhaps. Approximately 89 percent of this uncounted population was estimated to be black or hispanic. We, in New York, actually believe the undercount of these groups to be far greater than that.

As a result of this disproportionate undercount, New York City has been deprived of political representation of one additional Member of Congress, and between $26 million and $52 million annually in terms of Federal funds. Over a period of 5 years that translates into a potential cost to the city of nearly $250 million.

New York City has a legitimate stake in the undercount issue, and has pressed in the courts for a statistical adjustment to the 1980 census count because the Bureau has refused to adjust the count itself. Our lawsuit on that issue is still pending, but we want to urge the Census Bureau to do everything it can to do a better job in 1990. Let's look at the past, correct the errors, and include provisions for a statistical undercount adjustment, instead of having to go through lawsuits as has been traditional at the end of a census. Why can they not work out a procedure whereby they can in advance agree on how to deal with what they know in advance will be an undercount because of the methods which are employed, and which may not simply be possible to reach everyone.

There is one request that I would like to make of this committee, that you insure that the Census Bureau makes its 1990 procedures public early enough to permit meaningful local comment, and to allow for change and improvement in those procedures. We are particularly concerned about the Bureau's plans for the use of foreign language questionnaires because of the variety of languages spoken by New Yorkers. I always like to say that, in the city of New York, Mass is said in the Roman Catholic churches, I am told, in 24 different languages every single day. This committee can insure timely publication by the Bureau of its 1990 plans.

As I said when I started, I would try to be brief, and I think I have been. I look forward to working with you and the Bureau and other municipal officials on ways to improve the 1990 census. And again, Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee, Mr. Ackerman, I appreciate your coming and holding the hearings here.

Mr. GARCIA. Mr. Mayor, I would just like to take this opportunity to explain to the people who are here today what the heck we are doing, worrying in 1986 about 1990. Well, I chaired the Census Subcommittee in the 1980 census.

What I found out then, and what I know now, is that most of the work, the detail work of the census, is buttoned up in the 2 years prior to the actual census. In other words, in less than a year and a half they must have contracts signed and everything in place.

So, right now is when they are looking at questionnaires, right now is when they are going through the forms that must be print-

ed and signed for in 1988. So, it is for those reasons that we are here.

Mr. Mayor, at this particular moment in the history of the city of New York, how many homeless do we approximately have?

Mayor KOCH. Well, it is very hard to give you a total figure, but let me tell you the numbers that we provide for. And then obviously there will be others that don't come in to our shelters; and how we define homeless.

We have two classes of homeless. The single individual and the family. The family constituting, generally speaking, of a woman with two or three children. First, let me take the single individuals for whom we provide dormitory space. On an average night, we provide for more than 9,000. The figure is probably over 9,100. I didn't check it for a couple of weeks, but at that time it was 9,100. We provide them with cots, sheets, blankets, three meals a day, sanitation facilities, medical care, showers.

Gary Ackerman was in such a shelter. It is definitely not a bed of roses. Nevertheless, it is quite expensive for a whole host of reasons that are almost unimaginable to people. We have to have a lot of security people. We have an enormous number of security guards because it is a population that has many—not all, but many—who have been institutionalized for mental disability and permitted to leave when perhaps they should not have been; or if they were, they should have been given continued State supportive treatment, which was not done.

There are many who are admitted alcoholics, many who are admitted drug addicts. And that is a very tough population to deal with, and so, we have a lot of security there.

Then you have the families who we call homeless. They are not people that come off the streets. Very few families come off the streets. Where they come from are houses which have been the subject of fires. I have been on weekends called to the scene of a major fire. The last one I recall running up and seeing this number of people, it happened to be in Harlem, 78 people had to get shelter. Their house, this tenement, burned. We have to provide them with shelter. Now, that happens all the time.

Or houses that are declared to be unfit for habitation. They are dangerous, something has happened to them. We've got to clear them out, and bring people into the shelter. That population, so-called homeless families, is roughly 4,100 families. And you multiply that by 4, it is roughly 16,000 people. We put them into 55 hotels and 5 congregate shelters.

We don't like doing it. The question is always raised, "Why do you put them into these hotels?" and "Look at the rates you are paying." Well, we don't want to do it. It is a question of supply and demand. And what we pay is generally speaking on the average of $15 per night, per person. But if you have a family of four, that is $60 a night, and you multiply that by 7 days and it is $420 a week. And you multiply that by 4 weeks, that is over $1,600 a month. That is how you get to those large figures.

So, you say to yourself, why is it that you don't put them into permanent accommodations? I only wish we had the permanent accommodations to put them in. The Federal Government—and I don't blame you because you have been leading the fight to change

that—in the last 3 or 4 years, the Federal Government authorized for the city of New York 500 low-income apartments with the New York City Housing Authority; 500 in the last 3 or 4 years total.

Now, unlike any other city in America, we use our capital budget, and over the last 2½ years we rehabilitated in the abandoned buildings, 6,400 apartments. A lot of apartments. The Federal Government did 500 in about 3 or 4 years. We did 6,400 with our own money in 2½ years. No city does that.

And we took the families out of the hotels. When we started it, we only had 2,200 families in the hotels. That is roughly 9,000 people. We took 6,400 families, you have to multiply that by 4 and it is over 24,000 people, put them into these apartments. The cost on these apartments range anywhere from $25,000 to $70,000, depending on the state of vandalism, to put into shape for habitation. And today, even though we started with 2,200 families and we took 6,400 families, we have 4,100 families in the hotels.

So, it is an unending problem and one that we desperately need help with. The city of New York with Federal, State, and city moneys being in the total pot, this year we are spending on the two classifications of homeless, $230 million. It is one of the fastest growing parts of our budget.

Mr. GARCIA. What about your Adopt a Family Program, how is that going?

Mayor KOCH. Well, that just started. It is a very special program which we will hope will work. What it does is this: Working with the churches and the synagogues, who are doing a terrific job, the program provides accommodations for single people. The last time I looked, it was 1,500, maybe 2,000, people a night. I just don't remember the exact number. And now, what they want to do is to provide special assistance to families. They are going to try and help get them apartments. We pay for the apartment, but then give the supportive care. Because these families are families that don't have the greatest structure and they need help. And the churches and the synagogues will be helping. It is a very small program. We hope to place 200 families this year.

Can I just make one other comment about rent?

Mr. GARCIA. Sure.

Mayor KOCH. Because people don't understand the dimensions of the problem.

We have a 2-percent vacancy rate, which means no vacancy rate—none. Because of the apartments that we are counting, about 3 percent are uninhabitable, although people are living in them. So, it is less than a zero true vacancy rate, but it is called 2 percent. We have said to people that we want the private sector to provide apartments. We pay for it. The State of New York sets the limit on the rent. They raised it recently, about 2 years ago, to make it more acceptable, and we did something else with the State and Federal Government.

We said to landlords if you give us a lease for 2 years at the regular rent that the State fixes as reasonable for a family of four, whatever that is—it used to be $218, it may have gone up—we will give you, said we, and this is several years ago, an additional $4,000 which you will use to repair the apartment. It's a gift in a sense. If you give us a lease that will be at the State-set maximum, so you

are really getting twice as much almost, if not more, by the fact that we are giving you $4,000 up front.

And while that program was in effect, I think about 2 years, 400 apartments is my recollection came in with that $4,000 gift. It obviously didn't work. Remember, we built 6,400 apartments in that last 2½ years. So now, we have a new program, $10,000. It is a program that has been authorized by the State, Federal Government, city, that if a landlord comes in and gives us a 32-month lease, we will give them up front, if they have a lease, that will set it at the maximum that the State provides, $10,000.

I don't know if it will work or not, but that shows you the effort that we are trying to make to get people permanent apartments. We don't want people to live in hotels, especially the kind of hotels that are available.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you very much, Mayor.

The attempts that the city is trying to make with your leadership when one understands the math, are truly heroic. And the enormity of the problem and the fact that additional people keep entering this condition of homelessness is basically overwhelming.

One question that maybe goes beyond our scope, but I think it is very, very important: What type of Federal commitment would be needed in order to break the cycle of the homeless?

Mayor KOCH. Easy, it doesn't require a lot of study. You don't have to go to a commission to do this—to provide housing.

When you consider the need in the city of New York, yesterday the Governor and I announced with a great deal of fanfare, and we are very proud of it, and the State legislature was represented there. We have gotten the State legislature to agree to allow the city to use its money, $400 million that we will ultimately take in in taxes from Battery Park City—which is a wonderful State-run operation, but it is in the city and those are New York City taxes. And we are going to use $400 million to build over a 10-year period, 24,000 apartments.

If you take the total of the moneys that the State and the city are putting in under this grand plan to make a special effort for housing, we will, in a 10-year period, be building 60,000 housing units. That would be 6,000 a year. Do you know how many we need? We need 60,000. We need 10 times that amount. The estimate today is that you need 1 million new apartments over the next 10 years to provide for the need.

Now, what can the Federal Government do? Traditionally, the Federal Government has been in the business of providing housing for low-, moderate-, middle-income people in some form; subsidies in some form. The Reagan administration has totally eliminated those programs. Now maybe, and I wouldn't agree, they could say well, we don't want to provide housing for middle-income people. I think that is a foolish position. But you know, they could say let them get it on their own. It is very hard to, and I would say that is a dumb position to take on their part, if that is what they took.

But how in the world could you even take that position vis-a-vis the poorest of the poor, who can't possibly go out and rent housing. (A) The housing isn't there; and (B) whatever is there costs more than they can possibly pay for. So, if there is a single request on this subject relating to housing, it would be provide the dollars.

Overwhelmingly, housing is the answer to the needs of poor people and homeless people.

Mr. ACKERMAN. One quick followup, Mr. Mayor, if I may. If there were successful legislation that would have the Federal Government somehow miraculously provide the funding for additional housing for the homeless, would the city's dollar commitment that has been there thus far be withdrawn, or would that money go into programmatic things for the homeless, such as education and job training?

Mayor KOCH. No.

If the Federal Government comes back into the housing business, we will commit to making some effort on our part. We can't do better than that. We are not going to withdraw our funds if the Federal Government comes back in. Although you should understand, no city in America does what we do.

We are spending this year several hundred million dollars out of both our capital and operating budgets to provide for housing. No city does that.

May I make one last comment?

Mr. ACKERMAN. Sure.

Mayor KOCH. You know, our housing program for homeless people is constantly attacked and I don't think people understand why they are wrong, because it is clear you see somebody who needs help—a woman with several young children, and they are in a 42d Street hotel, and your heart goes out to them. And you don't want to, unless you are involved in having to solve the problem and not just criticize the problem or critique the problem, you don't want to know the problems. You don't want to know there are no other hotels. Hotels happen to be in the midtown area. The other hotels that are in the other parts of town, we've already filled them up.

We want people to go into apartments. So, what we want to do is to get people to understand the difference between, for example, New York City and Hoboken. Now, you might say why pick on Hoboken. Hoboken is a little town, it is a nice town. I came from New Jersey, and I am not knocking Hoboken, but I want to tell you of a story that appeared in the New York Times about maybe a year ago or more.

It concerned itself with the Roman Catholic Church, and the nuns in that church doing God's work said we are going to take homeless into our church. They will sleep here. But, there was a certificate of occupancy for 20 people, let's say, and the story reported in the New York Times that when the 21st person came, and everyone thereafter that night, the Sister would say, "Here is a subway token. Go to New York. They will take care of you." We do. Because we don't ask anyone, Where did you sleep last night? How long have you been in the city of New York? We don't ask those questions. We just take them in, as we should.

Occasionally I think of that story, and then I think of the attacks made upon the city. And we are proud of what we have done, and at the same time ashamed that it has to be as limited as it is simply because of the limitations on our resources.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Mayor, as formerly one of and on behalf of all of those tens of thousands of homeless people in our streets, thank you, for making room at the inn.

Mayor KOCH. I don't know whether you know that Joe Addabbo passed away.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Yes, we do know.

Mayor KOCH. We have lowered the flag here at city hall. He was our colleague, and our friend, and we will miss him.

Mr. GARCIA. We certainly will, too.

Mr. Mayor, just let me say that, on behalf of this committee, we are really delighted that you took the time to be with us. And I mean that sincerely, and you know that. And that this issue is one that is not going to diminish; it is going to grow.

Mayor KOCH. Right.

Mr. GARCIA. And so, based on that, we have to stay on top of it, and I am glad that you are here with us today.

Thank you very much.

Mayor KOCH. Thank you.

Mr. GARCIA. We will take a 5-minute recess so that the microphones can be set up.

[Off the record.]

Mr. GARCIA. Our next witness is William Hill, who is the Regional Director for the New York Regional Office, U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Mr. Hill, we will enter your entire statement into the record. And then I suggest you summarize your statement.

Mr. Bill Hill.

STATEMENT OF BILL HILL, NEW YORK REGIONAL DIRECTOR, U.S. BUREAU OF THE CENSUS, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. HILL. Mr. Chairman, I have a nice 3-minute version here.

Mr. GARCIA. Terrific.

Mr. HILL. Chairman Garcia, I am William Hill, Regional Director of the New York Regional Office of the U.S. Census Bureau. I would like to thank you for this opportunity to testify on the decennial census as it relates to housing and the homeless.

Let me start with our standard set of procedures that help us to define housing units and to determine where persons should be counted in the census. A housing unit is a house, an apartment, a group of rooms, or a single room occupied as separate living quarters. Or, if vacant, intended for occupancy as separate living quarters.

In accordance with census practice dating back to the first U.S. census in 1790, each person enumerated in the 1980 census was counted as an inhabitant of his or her usual place of residence, which is generally construed to mean the place where the person lives and sleeps most of the time.

The Bureau of the Census identifies two major categories of households: family and nonfamily. A Family household requires the presence of at least two persons. The householder and one or more other persons who are relatives of the householder through birth, marriage, or adoption. Related subfamilies are family groups made up of persons related both to each other and to the house-

holder. A nonfamily household is composed of a householder living alone, or with one or more persons to whom he or she is not related.

A few households contain subgroups who are related to each other, but not to the householder. These are called unrelated subfamilies. In 1980, persons in housing units in most of the country were enumerated by mail. We also had three special operations to count transient persons. The transient night operation was conducted for such places as hotels, motels, and transient homes charging more than $4 per night. The M-night, or mission night operation, covered persons at missions, flop houses, or other transient accommodations renting for less than $4 per night. Local jails and similar short term detention centers, and places such as all night theaters, railroad stations and bus depots.

For highly transient persons, who might have been missed by all other approaches, we conducted the casual count enumeration in places like employment offices, bus and train stations not covered by M-night enumeration, welfare offices, food stamp centers, pool halls, and selected street corners.

Persons with multiple residences present one type of problem. Where should they be counted on census day. Which of their homes should they choose as their usual residence. In contrast to this group, persons without a usual place of residence are counted where they happen to be staying at the time of census. To illuminate the application of our residence and housing rules, allow me to explain how we handled some diverse situations in New York in 1980.

First, our intense focus on counting during a census enables us to enumerate people regardless of their housing situation. Thus, in areas where there are squatters and deteriorated housing, we use groups of interviewers designated as blitz teams to carry out enumeration of those areas. We also extended the time for mission night procedure when we felt we had additional persons to count. For example, we enumerated subway transients at major subway stops. Also on another evening, we combed the tunnels under Grand Central Station looking for persons to enumerate.

For 1990, we are working to improve our Coverage Improvement Program. For example, we have been testing ways to improve the effectiveness of updates of our mailing list in both urban and rural areas. For urban areas, we are focusing on ways to improve coverage and delivery accuracy in multiunit structures that do not have full apartment numbering systems by trying to develop more effective procedures for Post Office reviews of our list; and second, by having our enumerators do a unit by unit check of basic address and apartment numbers.

Another change from 1980 will be a precensus review by local officials of the initial housing counts for each block. Also, as part of our outreach effort, we will be working with local and national organizations that represent the interests of the hard to enumerate population.

At this time, we do not anticipate that our definition of a housing unit will change for 1990. Nor do we expect basic changes in the residency rules. In particular, the issue of the homeless has received growing attention in the past few years. The Census Bureau

does not separately identify the homeless counted in the census. We do identify persons who report that they do not have a usual place of residence.

For 1990, we are considering contacting social service agencies in addition to local officials with a casual count operation, and to obtain lists of shelters for inclusion on M-night.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my brief remarks. I will be glad to answer any questions that you may have at this time.

[The prepared statement follows:]

STATEMENT OF WILLIAM HILL
REGIONAL DIRECTOR
NEW YORK REGIONAL OFFICE
FIELD DIVISION, BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON CENSUS AND POPULATION
AT NEW YORK CITY

April 11, 1986

Chairman Garcia, I am William Hill, Regional Director of the New York Regional Office of the U.S. Census Bureau. I would like to thank you for this opportunity to testify on the decennial census as it relates to housing and the homeless. We share your concerns about potential problems in this area, and we certainly appreciate having this opportunity to work with the Subcommittee and the City of New York early in the census planning process to improve our procedures for the 1990 Decennial Census.

OVERVIEW OF THE 1980 DECENNIAL CENSUS

Today, as requested by the Subcommittee, I will summarize the residence rules and definitions used in 1980 for attributing individuals to a particular residence and for counting multiple families sharing a single residence. Also, I will address our efforts to count housing units (or living quarters) in urban areas in 1980. Later in my presentation, I will describe the Census Bureau's plans for the 1990 Decennial Census as they relate to these issues and, in particular, to counting the homeless.

DEFINITIONS

Let me start with our standard set of procedures that help us to define housing units and to determine where persons should be counted in the census.

A housing unit is a house, an apartment, a group of rooms, or a single room occupied as separate living quarters or, if vacant, intended for occupancy as separate living quarters. Separate living quarters are those in which the occupants live and eat separately from any other persons in the building and which have direct access from the outside of the building or through a common hall.

While our instructions for defining housing units have changed over time from the 1940 exclusion of units "uninhabitable beyond repair" to the 1980 exclusion of units "open to the elements," the concept has generally remained the same--that is, to count units where people live or could live and to exclude from the housing stock structures which no longer meet their design intent due to physical deterioration.

The residence rules that have evolved for the decennial census generally have referred to persons living in standard arrangements. In accordance with census practice dating back to the first U.S. Census in 1790, each person enumerated in the 1980 census was counted as an inhabitant of his or her usual place of residence, which is generally construed to mean the place where the person lives and sleeps most of the time.

The development of residence rules for each census has been evolutionary--small changes of interpretation and addition or deletion of groups for which special rules are required. Nevertheless, basic rules were laid

down and maintained since the first census Act of March 1, 1790:

> Be it enacted, that every person whose usual place of abode shall be in any family on the aforesaid first Monday in August next, shall be returned as of such family, and the name of every person, who shall be inhabitant of any district, but without a settled place of residence, shall be inserted...in that division where he or she shall be on the first Monday in August next, and every person occasionally absent at the time of the enumeration, as belonging to that place in which he usually resides in the United States.

Congress has not legislated this level of detail for recent censuses, but has delegated that authority to the Secretary of Commerce, who has in turn delegated it to the Bureau of the Census. This general authority over the census and specific residence rules have been reviewed and upheld by the courts, most recently in Borough of Bethel Park v. Stans, in 1971. The Census Bureau also has presented plans for residence rules to the Congress in hearings, prior to each recent census. A summary table of residence rules used in 1980 to determine the usual place of residence of individuals is provided as part of the testimony (Attachment I).

The Census Bureau identifies two major categories of households (which are housing units with people in them): family and nonfamily. Proper classification depends on the presence or absence of spouses and children, whether the persons live alone, and various other characteristics. A family household requires the presence of at least two persons--the householder (who owns or rents the living quarters) and one or more other persons who are relatives of the householder through birth, marriage, or adoption. (See Attachment II.)

Some family households are shared by more than one family group. Related subfamilies are family groups made up of persons related both to each other,

and to the householder. An example is a mother and her young child residing with the mother's parents. In 1985, there were about 2 million related subfamilies distributed over the approximately 62 million family households (see Attachment III).

A nonfamily household is composed of a householder living alone, or with one or more persons to whom he or she is not related. There were about 24 million nonfamily households in 1985, and close to 21 million of them consisted of persons living alone.

A few households contain subgroups who are related to each other, but not to the householder. These are called unrelated subfamilies. An example is a mother and her child living with an unrelated friend of the mother, or two mothers with children sharing a residence.

In addition to subfamilies, doubling-up also may occur. Examples include individual adult sons or daughters continuing to live with their parents rather than set up a household of their own, and older parents moving in with their own children. These occurrences are not counted as subfamilies, but are tabulated as additional family members.

STANDARD PROCEDURES

In 1980, persons in housing units in most of the country were enumerated by mail. Nonrespondents were personally visited. Persons in special places, such as jails, university dorms, mental hospitals, and so forth, were enumerated by special place crews, and were counted where located at the time of the enumeration.

We also had three special operations to count transient persons. The T-night (transient night) operation was conducted for such places as hotels, motels, and transient homes charging more than $4 per night. The M-night (mission night) operation covered persons at missions, flophouses, and other transient accommodations renting for less than $4 per night; local jails and similar short-term detention centers; and places such as all-night theaters, railroad stations, and bus depots. For highly transient persons who might have been missed by all other approaches, we conducted the casual count enumeration in places like employment offices, bus and train stations not covered by M-night enumeration, welfare offices, food stamp centers, pool halls, and selected street corners.

In 1980, we significantly expanded our efforts to count the entire population and housing inventory. First, prior to Census Day, we focused on developing an accurate mailing list to minimize the number of missed housing units and their occupants. For urban areas, our efforts included three postal checks of our initial list. We also conducted a dependent canvass of the enhanced list by enumerators. A dependent canvass is conducted to add to, correct, and update an existing list of addresses or units. Also, we merged our 1970 address list with commercial vendor lists prior to the post office check. This merger was done in three urban areas including New York City.

After Census Day our activities were aimed at improving coverage both of housing units and persons. For example, we verified the status of all units deleted by our nonresponse enumerators, who went into the field to check on households from which we received no response, as well as those reported to be vacant. Local officials were given an opportunity to review housing counts near the end of the census operation so that comparisons with locally gathered data could be

checked. Also, questionnaires from households which showed that there were two or more persons unrelated to the head of the household living there prompted visits to determine if more living quarters than one were involved.

In most large cities, we conducted a nonhousehold sources program, wherein names obtained from administrative lists, mostly drivers' license files, were matched against completed questionnaires and enumerated if the person was found to have been missed.

To count transients, we conducted three special operations: the T-night operation; the M-night operation, and the casual count enumeration. These operations have already been described.

Also, several efforts were aimed at improving within-household coverage for mail-return households. For example, there were specific questions on the form whereby respondents could mark that they were uncertain about whom to include so that follow-up visits could be made to correct any coverage errors. During questionnaire edit, we compared the number of persons listed on the cover of the form with the number of persons for whom there were data inside the form, and we followed up if there were indications there was a person or persons for whom no data had been reported. Finally, whenever a questionnaire failed edit, a verification of the number of occupants was made while collecting the additional data.

In addition to the various coverage improvement operations, other activities were conducted to encourage response. The largest of these was our publicity and outreach program. The focus of outreach was to get everyone to want to be counted. For example, newspaper advertisements, called "were you counted" forms, gave persons who thought they had been missed an opportunity to report.

Other activities included offering Spanish language questionnaires and providing assistance centers.

APPLICATIONS OF RESIDENCE RULES

The implementation of residence rules described earlier is sometimes difficult for two categories of persons whose usual place of residence is not immediately apparent--those with more than one residence, and those without a fixed residence at the time of the census.

Persons with multiple residences present one type of problem: Where should they be counted on Census Day? Which of their homes should they choose as their usual residence? For example, there are those who spend part of the year in New York and part in Florida. There are others who live at one address on the weekend, and work in another community where they maintain a home during the week. These persons are counted at the residence they consider their usual place of residence (generally based on the amount of time spent there). This determination is made by each respondent filling out the census form by following guidelines printed on the form. [1] These guidelines were previously upheld by the courts in Borough of Bethel Park v. Stans.

In contrast to this group, persons without a usual place of residence are counted where they happen to be staying at the time of the census. This group includes transient individuals who report themselves as having no usual place

[1]Currently being tested is a question which asks the respondent if he or she is unsure about whom to list on the questionnaire. If the answer is yes, the household will be contacted by census personnel and the issue decided. Another question being tested asks whether anyone in the household has another residence at which they stay for at least 30 days during the year. If the answer is yes, the address of the other residence is obtained and the person is asked which is the usual residence.

of residence elsewhere. It is from this group of individuals that we might attempt to obtain an approximation of the homeless population. I will describe our efforts in this area in more detail later in this testimony.

To illuminate the applicati.. of our residence and housing rules, allow me to explain how we handleu some diverse situations in New York in 1980. First, our intense focus on counting during a census enables us to enumerate people regardless of their housing situation. Thus in areas where there are squatters in deteriorated housing we used groups of interviewers, designated blitz teams, to carry out enumeration of those areas. Depending on street conditions, we used groups of enumerators as large as 150, accompanied by several layers of supervision.

We also extended the time for M-night procedure when we felt we had additional persons to count. We used inteviewers from local neighborhoods, and they know where transient people tend to live. To ensure a well-organized and accurate casual count operation, we held several meetings with the supervisors of our Special Place Operations. All casual count procedures, including checking target areas and staffing for the operation, w.re reviewed by the staff of the Regional Office before, during, and after the operation. This is by way of illustrating that regional management did in certain cases expand our standard operating procedures in order to respond to the special needs of cities like New York. For example, we enumerated subway transients at major subway stops. Also, on another evening we combed the tunnels under Grand Central Station looking for persons to enumerate.

Between field nonresponse and failed-edit follow-up we noticed that there were a large number of housing units classified as vacant in areas where

there were many dilapidated buildings. The Census Bureau undertook a special operation with a team of district managers, regional technicians, and New York Regional Office professional staff to go to these buildings to verify that they were unoccupied, and if they were, to classify the buildings as either nonexistent (that is, "delete") or vacant.

PLANS FOR THE 1990 DECENNIAL CENSUS

Now I would like to discuss our plans for the 1990 Decennial Census in regard to coverage improvement, counting housing structures, residency rules, and counting the homeless.

For 1990, we are working to enhance the effectiveness of our coverage improvement program. For example, we have been testing ways to improve the effectiveness of updates of our mailing lists in both urban and rural areas. We discussed the Address List Compilation Test in detail at a hearing of this Subcommittee last month. For urban areas, we are focusing on ways to improve coverage and delivery accuracy in multiunit structures that do not have full apartment numbering systems by (1) trying to develop more effective procedures for post office reviews of our lists, and (2) having our enumerators do a unit-by-unit check of basic address and apartment numbers.

Another change from 1980 will be a precensus review by local officials of the initial housing counts for each block. Other efforts will include trying to find more and better administrative lists of persons likely to be missed in the census. During the nonhousehold sources check, such persons will be matched to census questionnaires to determine if they were enumerated.

Also, as part of our outreach effort, we will be working with local and national organizations that represent the interests of the hard-to-enumerate population. We will be receiving the assistance of these organizations during both the planning and promotion phases. Groups from which we will be seeking assistance include long-time recognized national organizations, such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the League of United Latin American Citizens, the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association, and the National Congress of American Indians. We also will seek the aid of locally influential organizations, such as neighborhood and tenant organizations.

At this time we do not anticipate that our definition of a housing unit will change for 1990, nor do we expect basic changes in the residency rules. Nevertheless, specific situations such as multifamilies sharing a single residence, persons with multiple residences, and the homeless will require clarity in our instructions and procedures.

In particular, the issue of the homeless has received growing attention in the past few years. Social service agencies that administer to the needs of the homeless or street people are interested in obtaining reliable national information about the size of this difficult-to-enumerate population group.

The Census Bureau does not identify the "homeless" per se. An approximation of the homeless population can be derived by combining two groups of transient persons enumerated in the 1980 census special operations, which I mentioned earlier: (1) all persons enumerated on M-night; and (2) persons enumerated in the casual count operation who reported no usual residence elsewhere. The Census Bureau counted 50,794 such persons across the country in 1980.

For 1990, we are considering contacting social service agencies, in addition to local officials, for the casual count operation and to obtain lists of shelters for inclusion on M-night. In addition, the Census Bureau is currently testing a procedure in the 1986 Test Census of Central Los Angeles County to identify separately the following transient groups: (1) all persons counted on M-night; (2) casual count persons with no usual residence; (3) casual count persons who claim a usual residence inside the city; (4) casual count persons already counted at their usual residence; and (5) casual count persons who state they have a usual residence outside the city. These tallies will provide guidance in 1990 census planning and design of procedures.

CLOSING REMARKS

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my remarks. As 1990 approaches, we will search for a better way to define the homeless, work even more with localities to count them, and improve our census procedures. I will be glad to answer any questions you may have at this time.

Attachment I

TABLE OF RESIDENCE RULES

This table is divided into two columns. The type of person (student, member of the Armed Forces, etc.) is described in the left-hand column. The right-hand column tells you whether the person is a resident of this household or some other place.

Type of Person	Resident of--
1. Lives in this household but is temporarily on a visit, business trip, vacation, in connection with job (bus driver, traveling salesperson, boat operator, etc.)	This household
2. Lives in this household on weekends only Works most of the week in another place and maintains a room or apartment there	The other place
3. Lives in this household but is in a general or VA hospital, including new babies in the hospital who have not yet been brought home	This household (unless in a psychiatric ward etc.; if so, count in the hospital)
4. Member of the Armed Forces:	
a. Living on military installation	The military installation
b. Stationed on nearby installation but living off base in this household	This household
c. Assigned to a military vessel which is "deployed" to the 6th or 7th fleet	The vessel
OR	
The home port of the vessel is 50 miles or more away from this household	The vessel
d. Assigned to a military vessel which is not deployed to the 6th or 7th fleet and the household is within 50 miles of the home port of the vessel.	This household

Attachment 1

Table of Residence of Rules (continued)

Type of Person	Resident of--
5. Officer or crew member of a merchant vessel engaged in coastwide, intercoastal, or foreign transportation (including Great Lakes)	The vessel
6. Officer or crew member of a merchant vessel engaged in inland waterway transportation	This household
7. College Student:	
a. Not living in this household during school year,--here only on vacation	Place where they live while attending college
b. Living in this household during school year	This household
8. Student away attending school below college level (other than students at instructional type schools) or students attending boarding school such as Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) boarding schools	This household
9. Nurse living in hospital, nurses' home, etc.	Hospital, nurses' home
10. Family members working and living away from home	Place where they live while working away from home
11. Person who has more than one home and divides time between them	List at place where he or she spends the largest part of calendar year
12. American citizen abroad:	
a. On vacation or temporarily away in connection with his or her work	This household

Attachment 1

TABLE OF RESIDENCE RULES (Continued)

Types of Person	Resident of--
b. Employed by U.S. Government with place of duty abroad or member of the family of such person living with him or her	DO NOT LIST
c. Any other American working or living abroad for extended period of time	DO NOT LIST
13. Person in special places where people usually stay for long periods of time such as correctional or penal institutions, penitentiaries, jails, workhouses, reformatories, convict camps, schools for delinquents (regardless of length of sentence or stay), mental institutions, homes for the needy or aged, hospitals and asylums for the chronically ill and handicapped, homes or schools for the deaf, blind, or mentally retarded	The special place
14. Members of religious orders living in monastery, convent, etc.	The monastery or convent
15. Persons in places which have shifting populations composed mainly of persons with no fixed residence, such as railroad camps, and highway and other construction camps	The camp
16. Citizens of a foreign country:	
a. Studying or working in the United States or the members of the family of such person living with him or her	This household
b. Temporarily traveling or visiting the U.S.	DO NOT LIST
c. Living on the premises of an Embasy, Ministry, Legation, Chancellery, or Consulate	DO NOT LIST

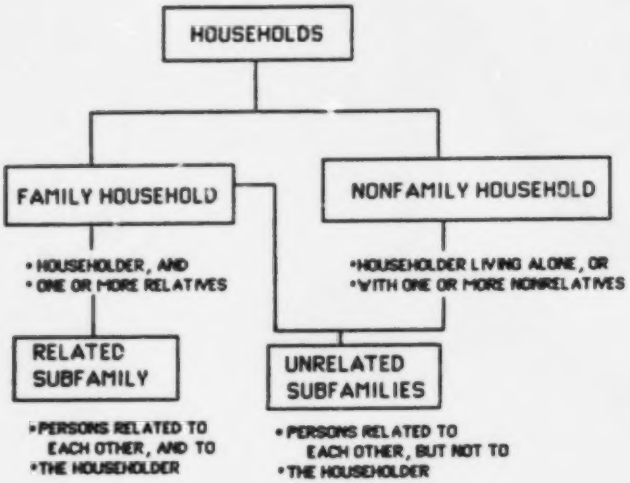
Attachment 1

TABLES OF RESIDENCE RULES (Continued)

Type of Person	Resident of--
17. Domestic servants who "live-in"	Determine if the servant occupies a household unit separate from the main household. If YES, list on a separate census questionnaire. If NO, list on the household census questionnaire.
18. Visitors	Ask if there is someone at home to report the person to a census taker. If NO, list the person in Question H3 on page 4 of the short-form questionnaire or page 20 of the long-form questonnaire. If YES, do not list name of visitor on this questionnaire.

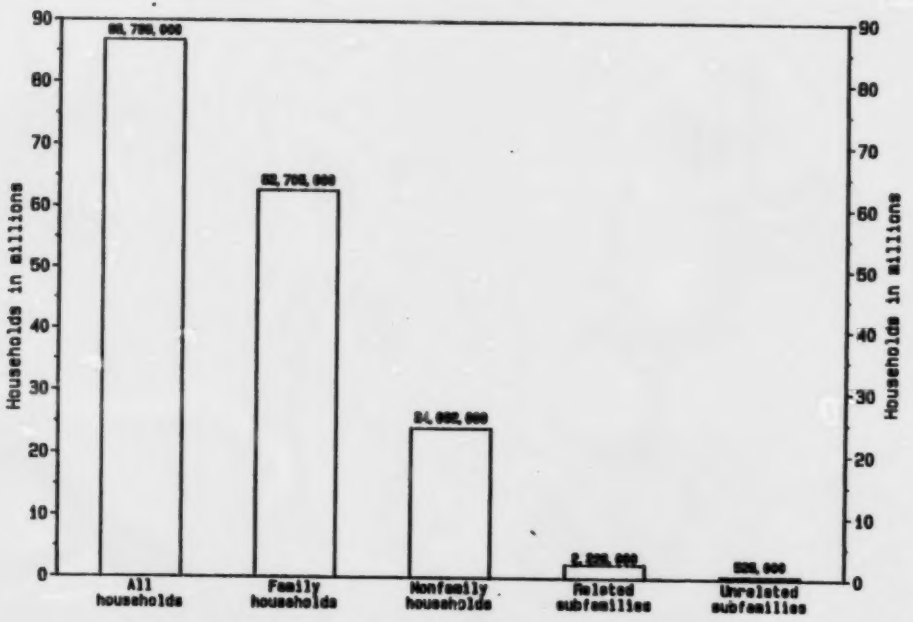
Attachment II

FAMILY AND NONFAMILY HOUSEHOLDS



Attachment III

Household and Family Groupings: 1985



Mr. GARCIA. Mr. Hill, I would like to hold my questions and ask you to continue to sit with the panel, as I bring the other panel members up. If any questions come up during the period of time the panel is there, you can help us in answering them.

Would you mind doing that?

Mr. HILL. That will be fine.

Mr. GARCIA. Why don't you sit over there.

And what we will do now is bring up a good friend, a former State legislator, a person that I have known for many, many years, and that I am always happy to welcome, Lloyd Dickens.

We will also be incorporating the testimony of Mr. Luis Miranda, who is accompanied by Mr. Sergio Rivera, the executive director of the New York City Housing Coalition.

[Pause.]

Mr. GARCIA. We really appreciate you taking time out of your busy schedule to be with us today, and I would like to ask the three of you to do the following. Since we have your statements, we would like you to summarize them. If there are any questions that we want to ask the Census Bureau, or that you want to ask us, we will both be here to try to respond.

Why don't we start off with you, Mr. Dickens?

STATEMENT OF LLOYD E. DICKENS, HOUSING CONSULTANT, NEW YORK, NY; AND LUIS MIRANDA, ACCOMPANIED BY SERGIO RIVERA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE NEW YORK HISPANIC HOUSING COALITION

Mr. DICKENS. Thank you. The honorable chairman of the Subcommittee on Census and Population, Robert Garcia, is a longstanding friend, and that is one of the reasons I am here. Of course, I would be here anyway because of the importance of the situation.

I might just say a few words about myself: My name is Lloyd E. Dickens. I am in the real estate business. This is what I am very interested in, and something has to be done because of the shortage of housing. We are living in a great city, but we find buildings vacant. Plenty of vacancies, but they can't be used for housing because they are run down. Something has got to be done about it.

I attempted to do something about it. I did develop possibly the last section 8 that was given in Harlem. There is still a great need for it. Just the other day you may have seen in the paper where I developed five brownstones, so I am attempting to do something about it. But you can't do very much about it because private developers cannot afford to put the money out at this high price and so forth. So, the Government must take up the slack.

Now, they did that for the last decade, but now under the Reagan administration, they have cut all that out. But section 8, and 236 should be restored and must be restored. Now, I am talking quite a little bit about housing when this is a Census Committee, but the point is that housing and the census are so intertwined until they both are very important.

I have seen many people who said they were not on the census rolls. Nobody came to them. Something has got to be done about that. I have heard other people say, and I have actually heard

census takers say—and I interviewed them while they were there—did you go on the top floor? Oh, no, I wouldn't go up there.

What can we do about it? One of the things we can do is to teach the census takers a little bit more than what they have been taught because they don't seem to even know what they are doing. And I am going to address that to the head man here of the census.

They need to be trained; the public needs to be trained. Some of the reasons census takers don't get the people, particularly in the minority districts—Hispanic and black districts—where so many of those people think that the investigators are coming for some other reason. They don't know, they don't understand so they don't give the information freely. And since they don't give it, we do not have them on the roles.

There are other people here that are not citizens, but the census count should be taken regardless. I read in the Bible that during the era of Moses, they took census. They did not have the electronics and so forth that we can now provide, but I actually believe they did a better job of census taking then than they are doing now.

Mr. Chairman, you said cut it short, and so I am going to do that.

[The prepared statement follows:]

TESTIMONY BY

LLOYD EVERETT DICKENS

Former New York State Assemblyman
and well-known
Harlem Real Estate Broker and Developer

Mr. Chairman, members of the Subcommittee on Census and Population, and ladies and gentlemen:

My name is Lloyd Everett Dickens, a licensed real estate broker and certified real estate manager, and I have been in business, primarily in the Harlem Community, for more than half a century.

I am indeed happy to be able to have this opportunity to address the issues of housing as they pertain to the government's 1990 decennial census.

At the outset, I would like to preface my remarks by giving some of my background so that my comments before this distinguished body will be more clearly understood.

My family and I have been residents of the Harlem Community for more than half a century, and I have devoted my entire business life to the real estate industry. On the side, I have also enjoyed working in the political arena, serving as a member of the New York State Assembly from 1958 to 1965, and as a Democratic Party District Leader in Central Harlem from 1952 to 1966. I have managed or owned more than 1,000 residential apartments at the same time, almost exclusively in the Harlem area.

Just this past Tuesday, and some of you may have read about it in the daily newspapers, or seen it on television, or heard about it on radio, my daughter, Mrs. Inez Dickens Russell and I were indeed proud as the Mayor of our city, the President of the City Council, the Borough President

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of Manhattan, our State Assemblywoman, our City Councilman, our State Senator and over 500 local community leaders and residents joined with us in the official opening ceremonies for Dickens Garden, a middle-income rehabilitated landmark building at the corner of 139th Street and Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Boulevard, on the corner of what is commonly called in Harlem as "Strivers Row."

I have said this because I know Harlem. I have spent all of my adult life there, and I will continue to live and do business in Harlem because I strongly believe in my community and my people.

In the letter inviting me to appear before this committee, I was asked to comment on the changes in housing trends among low-income communities and the housing needs of the city as it relates to the budget cuts and the responsibilities of both the private and public sectors.

Our Dickens Garden and Mall was just a breath of fresh air in the total housing in the Harlem Community. Today, as I look over Harlem, there is a crying need for more developments such as this.

Yet, this cannot be done by private developers alone, because housing is too expensive for the average private developer. The banks and major lending institutions still have their imaginary red line against lending to minority developers in the inner city communities. With the major budget cuts, the Federal funding for the Section 8 and the 236 housing programs has ended. These Federal programs were the prime sources for new development in Harlem over the past decade, and the Reagan Administration has now dried them up.

Instead of building more luxury housing and condos on top of midtown buildings, both the private and public sectors should be forced to concentrate construction in the areas of greatest need.

Harlem needs new construction and rehabilitation. We need low-rent housing. We need middle-income housing. And, we need upper-income housing. God knows we have the available empty space for it, and I cannot say it too strongly, the bulk of the money to rebuild our community must come from government and through government subsidies. To make a conservative estimate, I would urge that the public and private sectors team together to help to build and rehabilitate at least 20,000 housing units in Harlem over the next ten years. This can be done on vacant land or in buildings that are presently sealed up and uninhabitated.

In our Dickens Garden, as in other developments in which we have participated, there was a massive demand for available space. We had over 500 applications for 16 apartments before we refused to accept more applications. Many of these were from former New Yorkers who had moved to the suburbs and wanted to come back to Harlem.

There is a need, yes, even a demanding need, for new and rehabilitated housing that can increase the population and bring new life and vitality into our inner cities, and the real answer lies in decent, affordable housing. The Reagan budget cuts only add to the weakening of the inner cities and bring on greater problems.

Federal monies must be restored to the Section 8 and

236 programs, and the UDAG Grants must be re-funded. As members of the United States Congress, I urge you to take this message back to your colleagues.

It was estimated by many astute political observers in Harlem that the community lost nearly 75,000 residents between the 1970 and 1980 census counts.

All of these residents did not move out of the community nor were they forced out by the razing of buildings in the Harlem area. Some of these residents are still in Harlem--but they were overlooked or just not counted in 1980.

It has long been said that a fair census would probably increase the number of Black and Hispanic public officials in our legislative bodies. After each census I have heard local public officials bitterly complain that their areas were not adequately counted by the census representatives. This outcry has not only come from duly elected public officials, but also from community leaders, civic officials and hundreds of ordinary citizens who have personally told me that they or their families were not counted in the census.

As public officials, I know that all of you want a fair and honest count of our population.

You will ask me, then, to tell you just what you can do or recommend to be done to insure that the Black and Hispanic communities get a fair and honest count in 1990.

I would like to make a few remarks in this regard.

As we all know, in many of the Black and Hispanic communities in our nation's cities today, there are acres and acres of run-down and dilapidated buildings--many

sealed by city officials as uninhabitable. Others are waiting to be sealed and are inhabited by homeless persons and/or drug addicts. This has and will present a problem for individual census takers as many fear to even go into these buildings.

In other instances, thousands of our minority residents do not work between the hours of nine-to-five, and many work during varying hours around the clock. This is true of Black and Hispanic communities in many of the major cities throughout the country.

And, in many of these minority communities, many are skeptical of "outsiders" coming around asking questions

During the last census, the government initiated a special program whereby community persons from community-based units worked in the minority communities to assist in securing census data and were responsible to the over-all regional directors.

From what I have gathered from people in my community, many of these community-based units were looked upon as a pain by many civil service regional officials and often given little real input into the census activity and limited budgets with which to operate.

Much of the Census Bureau's literature is written in language even lawyers have difficulty in understanding, and there is not enough training of census takers for them to get ready to talk to the various publics they must deal with in securing the vital confidential information that is required on the census forms.

Today, in many parts of our community and city, there are hundreds of thousands of persons who do not speak

English, and nearly twenty percent of the residents of New York City have less than a fifth-grade education.

In what I call Central or Black Harlem, I keep people on my staff who are Spanish-speaking because of the mixture of the population which has developed over the past several years. Just within the past three or four years in Central Harlem there has been a vast influx of Korean and other Asian businessmen and their families, many of whom do not always speak English. They all do, however, understand the green dollar. In many parts of Brooklyn, for example, there has been a mass immigration of people from Haiti who only speak French.

I would conclude that in a city of nearly 8,000,000 people, New York City perhaps has as many as a million-and-a-half who do not speak English.

Thus, how can an English-speaking census taker, not knowing a person's language and/or his/her background and culture, adequately get confidential information from him or her?

As one involved in real estate and housing in the inner city, I strongly recommend that the Census offficials carefully research the regions and sections of the inner city before they plan and assign census takers and supervisors.

Early on, in the planning stages, they should develop the type of Madison-Avenue approaches used by the business community to reach their public and get away from the formal and stiff standard government approaches.

The community-based units must be given more adequate budgets to work with and become an integral part of the

initial planning and the day-to-day activities of the census operation, with shared power to insure an adequate census count.

As part of the census buildup, specially designed literature must be drawn in simple, everyday language and graphics for a less than fifth-grader to understand. Much should be in other languages.

It will be important to stress the confidential nature of the census information early and in many instances for census takers to work in teams, often with one bi-lingual person, as they go into inner city areas.

Many persons in inner city communities or members of their families have had "brushes" with the law, and specialized training must be given the census personnel to enable them to reach out to people in the shortest period of time. All forms of the media in the community must be employed in this undertaking.

In many inner city communities small vans could be used weeks and months ahead of the actual census taking to help soften up the community for the actual information gathering.

Over the past half-century and more I have heard the complaints from individual citizens that they were not counted. Some have said the taker never came when I was at home. Others have said that they came and when no one was home, they never returned. In some buildings, the census takers were just afraid to enter.

To the political leaders, a fair census count is essential and a must. To the social worker, it may help

to determine the amount of government monies that may be appropriated for that area by government officials. In many instances, where there is a minority undercount, local political leaders often complain that this bitterly hurts them in getting more of their minority group elected or appointed to public office and thus be able to give stronger demands to their concerns and problems.

I urge this committee to take back strong recommendations to the Census Bureau that they look at what I am saying here today, and not give us another study "as usual" which will still have a minority undercount. Listen to the leaders in the communities and learn to understand what they say.

Mr. Chairman and members of this committee, I am pleased to have had an opportunity to make this testimony today and I hope that some of the serious concerns I have expressed here will assist in a better understanding of the grave concerns of the inner city communities in securing a fair and just census count in 1990.

Thank you.

LLOYD EVERETT DICKENS

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212/RIverside 9-2580

April 12, 1986

Mr. GARCIA. I can tell you are an old politician.

Why don't we then ask Luis Miranda, from the New York Hispanic Housing Coalition, to proceed.

STATEMENT OF LUIS MIRANDA

Mr. MIRANDA. Good morning, and thank you for inviting me to testify. And I will summarize my remarks.

I must agree that housing and the census count are together in New York City, and we heard this morning from the mayor about the housing emergency and our people are being undercounted. Specifically, Puerto Ricans now for four decades.

Caught in this crisis are Hispanic New Yorkers who cannot secure decent housing, and the results have been homelessness, displacement, gentrification, human misery, undercount; and consequently, less Federal dollars to deal with the problem.

A recent study conducted by the Office of Program Evaluation found that Hispanics accounted for 27 percent of the homeless families in the study. Many of these families have moved in with relatives before they became homeless. We don't know the total number of homeless families. We do know that in this particular study, where Hispanics account for 27 percent of homeless families, 40 percent of them said that they temporarily moved in with friends and relatives.

A key component that I want to raise in this hearing is that public housing needs to be addressed as a key issue in the undercount. A New York Times article published yesterday in the metropolitan section, estimated that doubling and tripling of families in public housing in New York City had reached 15 to 20 percent. If there are approximately 173 families in public housing with an average occupancy of 3.5 for people, that could lead to anywhere between 100,000 and 150,000 individuals who are living, who are in public housing right now, who will not be counted.

Some families are living in crowded conditions in one or two bedroom apartments, while others have five bedroom apartments. According to the New York City Housing Authority research on public development report of January 1984, Puerto Ricans accounted for 134,000 approximately of public housing residents in the city.

If many of these individuals, and many of these families are doubling and tripling, and someone is going to count them, they are not going to say that an extra family is living with them. So that, in fact, you may have a much higher Puerto Rican population, Hispanic population in these public buildings.

So, I wanted to raise the issue, and you have my full testimony, of public housing and how we need to address public housing as part of the undercount.

Mr. GARCIA. I thank you very much.

Are you here to accompany him, or are you going to testify as well?

Mr. RIVERA. I have some recommendations.

Mr. GARCIA. Fine.

STATEMENT OF SERGIO RIVERA

Mr. RIVERA. My recommendations include that we have more literature from the Census Bureau printed in Spanish. That the Community Service Program that you already have in place do some more outreach with community based organizations. And that the Bureau use CBO's as a resource to facilitate the count in 1990.

Also, more bilingual enumerators should be recruited from the neighborhood. And I would ask you to consider making questionaires available at community based organizations, so that we may be able to assist persons in completing them if necessary. I feel that that would help the census count in 1990.

[The prepared statements follows:]

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Testimony presented by Luis A. Miranda

Good Morning. My name is Luis A. Miranda, and on behalf of the staff and Board of Directors of the New York Hispanic Housing Coalition, I thank you for the opportunity given to us to testify.

New York City has a housing emergency for a while. It is a crisis for low-income families and a threat to the middle class. Its chief components are a lack of income necessary to meet the rising costs of shelter, and an increasing demand that continues to outpace the supply of affordable housing. The results are family and individual homelessness, displacement, gentrification and human misery.

Caught in this crisis are Hispanic New Yorkers. Many of them have no choice to secure decent housing. And it is the direct consequence of our economic and social conditions: poverty, overcrowding, poor urban planning and an spiral of property speculation that continue to dislocate the poor, many of them Hispanics, in favor of a new urban gentry.

A recent study conducted by the office of Program Evaluation of the Human Resource Administration, showed that the majority of homeless families are black and Hispanic, headed by a single, unemployed female in her late twenties or early thirties with two or three children. Hispanics accounted for 27% of the homeless families in that study. The study included a sample of 196 homeless families. Forty per cent of the families interviewed said that immediately after they lost their apartment, they temporarily moved in with relatives or friends. But is misleading to state or imply that only these families are homeless. Those who share apartments in public housing

with other families are also homeless. People come into our office constantly inquiring about a place to live. Some are living with their parents or siblings because they cannot find safe, decent and affordable housing in this city. Others have been on waiting lists to get into public housing for an unbelievable amount of years.

Public Housing needs to be addressed as a key issue within this housing emergency. Some families are living in crowded conditions in one or two bedroom apartments, while others (one or two persons) have five (5) bedroom apartments. There are problems with transfer procedures within the Authority, and this creates an obstacle that affect large families applying for residency.

According to the New York City Housing Authority Research and Public Development Report of January 1984, Puerto Ricans accounted for 134, 291 of Public Housing residents in the City. Puerto Rican youth under 21 numbered 63,782, a staggering 49%.

Sixteen buildings in heavily concentrated areas of public housing on the Lower East Side in Manhattan and two areas in Brooklyn alone, serve residences to 23,839 Puerto Ricans, and out of that population 9,864 are under the age of 21.

If half of the Puerto Rican population in public housing are children, we, as a city, are forcing our future--children--to live in overcrowded conditions with no privacy, no room to study or play, and no space they can call theirs.

Screening of tenants has declined in public housing, maintenance has declined, most of the Tenant Associations are either inactive, or active but mismanaged, and the inhabitants of these overwhelming tall brown buildings skirting the perimeters of New York City's boroughs are living in horrid conditions.

The answer to alienate family homelessness and overcrowding in our public housing is not the proposal to sell public housing that made its way from one conservative think tank into a recommendation in the President's Commission on Housing. The argument that some projects located in appreciating neighborhoods are "now attractive for unsubsidized residential use" and should be sold will only exacerbate New York City's housing storage. The idea that these apartments could be sold to private interest through conversions to condominiums or cooperative ownership for private rental housing is an attack to our communities.

The sub category of the ownership option would include sale of units to tenants as individual units or under condominium or cooperative terms of ownership. If according to the New York City Housing Authority Research and Public Development Report of 1984 35% of all families in public housing receiving welfare are Puerto Ricans, how do they fit into a homeownership opportunity scheme with such low income level? Quite simply, we do not believe that census undercounts have as much affect on the housing problems, as does the lack of sensitivity on the part of a federal administration with the power and the resources to contribute toward the amelioration of this horrendous housing problem, but opts to exacerbate the crisis.

Public Housing is not the only problem. The number of SRO units renting under $200 a month in the City of New York has fallen from 127,000 in 1971 to 18,000 today, primarily due to condo and co-op conversions.

Various estimates show that the city has acquired over 130,000 owner abandoned apartments, 80,000 vacant buildings and 50,000 in rem occupied tenements.

In January 1983, New York City was sheltering an average of 4,676 homeless men and 635 homeless women in 18 facilities. In January 1985 the City reported that it housed a total of 28,000 individuals in shelters and 8,000 families averaging 3.3 persons in shelters or welfare hotels.

In January 1986, that number had grown to 7,425 homeless men, and 950 homeless women housed in 22 facilities. Today the Human Resource Administration (HRA) regularly uses 55 hotels and six congregate family shelters to house some 3,300 homeless families.

Over the past 3 years, fifty million dollars a welcomed intervention has been awarded to 115 organizations throughout the state to develop housing for the homeless. This money will create 2,500 beds when all construction is completed. This includes a combination of permanent, emergency, transitional and mixed housing. But the Federal government needs to do much more.

Our communities have been continuously faced with undue hardships caused by exclusionary zoning districts, unaffordable housing development, co-op and condominum conversions and displacement.

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The N.Y. Hispanic Housing Coalition is among the thousands of advocates in the City of New York who are trying to convince the City Administration and our State Legislators that we must pursue the following steps in order to ameliorate the appalling housing conditions which plaque our communities throughout the city. We must:

- create more permanent low and moderate income housing
- preserve our existing housing stock
- protect tenant rights
- develop inclusionary zoning policy
- link new subsidized middle income to low and moderate income housing needs
- begin looking at the problems our communities in Public housing we are facing

We said once at your housing hearings in Washington, and we repeat again: Housing legislators for working-class and poor families is pro-life legislation. Unless we do more, our communities will bear the burden.

Testimony presented by Sergio Rivera

Good morning. My name is Sergio Rivera. I am the Director for the New York Hispanic Housing Coalition. On behalf of the staff, and Board of Directors I thank you for the opportunity given to testify.

Communities throughout the city today are facing the same issues of displacement and gentrification.

There are 59 community districts in New York City, and there are probably twice or three times that amount of planning councils and coalitions formed by community residents, not to mention community based organizations incorporated for the purpose of preserving and developing affordable housing for low and moderate income persons.

These entities of which the New York Hispanic Housing Coalition is one have been obstinate in their efforts to identify resources to carry out goals which will have a positive impact in preserving our communities. These organizations have successfully lobbied for programs such as the New York State Housing Trust Fund The Homeless Housing Assistance Program, the Urban Homesteading Program and a number of other programs which if refined and continued would contribute to a significant impact on our housing needs.

The New York Hispanic Housing Coalition is presently providing technical assistance to three Homesteading groups, a Homeless Housing Project and one elderly housing project. We have also designed a Homeowners Counselling Service to promote Homeownership primarily amongst the Hispanic community.

The service provides information and referrals concerning:

. available mortgage, fire and liability insurance

. budget counselling

. low interest loan programs

. assistance in negotiating contracts

In addition to the these services the New York Hispanic Housing Coalition coordinates an annual conference where city, state and federal agency officials are brought together in a forum with community based organizations to discuss ways and means of developing affordable housing to low and moderate income persons.

Economic fluctuations in our neighborhoods along compounded by a population shift have served to disperse our Hispanic communities from certain parts of the city, to find us becoming a significant percentage of the population in other boroughs.

The 1980 Hispanic population was counted at 1.4 million a 10% gain from 1970. In all boroughs, even with the claims that the Hispanic population was undercounted. the hispanic population represented a higher percentage of total population than in 1970. Over 85% of the city-wide increase in Hispanic population went to Queens and another 18% to Manhattan.

The relative distribution among the boroughs has shifted because of the large increase in Queens which in 1980 contained 18.7% of the city's hispanic population compared to 12% in 1970. The Hispanic population in the Bronx has also increased from 27.7% to 34%.

In 1980, Census recorded 860,552 persons who reported themselves as Puerto Rican origin or descent. This was an increase of 5.7% between 1970 and 1980. According to the 1980 Census, Manhattan's Puerto Rican population declined by 19,000. Queens gained significantly in Puerto Rican population over 50,000. Over 46% of Queens total gain in Hispanic population was Puerto Rican. It is believed that these in-movers came from other boroughs rather than directly from Puerto Rico.

Despite the total decline of Hispanics in the Bronx and Brooklyn, the proportion of those Hispanics remaining who were Puerto Rican had also risen.

The correlation which exists between the decrease in housing and the increase in homelessness is obvious. The Housing Need and Housing Production in NYC report produced by Carol Felstein and Sydelle Knepper define the housing gap as the difference between the number of standard units needed to house the population a well as maintain a 5 percent vacancy rate, and the number of existing standard (as distinct from substandard standard) units. The authors concluded that NYC needed 630,000 additional units to close the gap. Seventy percent, or 446,000 of this need could be obtained by moderate rehabilitation, and 184,000 units could only be met by new construction or substantial rehabilitation. New construction unless it is developed in coordination with city and community based input will most certainly be unaffordable to those who have become homeless. The Median income of NYC's nearly 2 million renter households is $12,797. At a limit of 30 percent for shelter, current a household at median income can pay $320 per month for rent. It costs the NYC Housing Authority, an average of $423.07 per month to maintain and operate each public

housing dwelling unit according to the NYC Mayor's Management Report, 1985. If the median renter income cannot support the actual cost of public sector, not for profit housing, characterized as it is by many units and clustered buildings, there is little left to say to establish the existence of a severe affordability gap. The Felstein/Knepper Report includes a projection for the next 5 years of housing production versus housing losses and the existing gap results in a gap of 296,000 new units which need to be created.

The effect the growth of the Hispanic population will have on housing trends could be significantly positive if Hispanics get a fair share of construction jobs necessary to create new housing; if resources and technical assistance are made available and accessible to Hispanics for business development; if our youth receive an education which provides incentives and focuses on the importance of the content studied, in relationship to real life.

Our community needs Census education as well. We need to inform our communities about the importance of being counted and the impact a fully represented people can have policy and legislation which effects all of our lives, and the future of our children.

Mr. GARCIA. Mr. Hill, I think a good question that was made just a second ago on multifamilies. There is no question that, because the Federal dollars are no longer available for public housing in New York City, we have found ourselves in a situation where there are people living in public housing who are not just the original family whose name is downstairs in the manager's office. These families also include uncles, aunts, cousins, and brothers, who have moved in with them because they have not been able to secure housing.

How are we going to make certain that those people are counted in 1990? And if we are, is it going to be done through the census forms?

In other words, are there any for questions in the Census forms about multifamilies living in public housing, or the homeless?

Are any provisions being thought about?

Mr. HILL. Well, there is a provision, of course, on the questionnaire now, in terms of the household roster. There is a provision on the form to list people who have no other residence and who are living in a unit even overnight on the census form.

Of course, we discover that there are other families in the unit by actually examining how the people in the unit relate to each other. As far as counting them better, and I agree with you, Mr. Chairman, anyone who lives in the city knows the kind of housing pressure that exists here. There is no question about that.

I think, of course, and you know, that our effort in the census in the free society that we have is to have people cooperate with us. It is obvious to me that we have to make a much larger, more focused, and more particular attempt, both with the CBO's and other groups—housing authority and whatever—in order to have people understand how important it is that they count themselves. And also understand that nothing in a legal way can happen to them because they have counted themselves.

And I was delighted by your statements, of course, and the other witnesses here today, including the mayor, reaching out to each other to solve this extremely difficult problem. And I welcome that.

Mr. GARCIA. Mr. Hill, just to proceed and go on, if I may, because I think that some of the statements made by this panel are directly related.

You are the regional director for the city of New York, and because the regions are not divided like ordinary Federal regions, you don't have half the State. Half the State goes to the Boston Office, half of it comes to the New York Office, part of New Jersey belongs to you, or whatever the case might be. So, our problems here are unique, and it just seems to me that you have a special responsibility because New York is different from any other urban center in the country.

You and I have been involved with the Census over the past 12 or 13 years. I guess the point I would like to make is what instructions are you receiving from Suitland, which is the headquarters for the Bureau of the Census, so as to make certain that the questionnaire that is being put together and signed off in 1988 is going to give us an absolute opportunity to count everybody?

Now, you talked about confidentiality. We all know that, and in spite of that, there are still many people who don't trust us. So, we

have to understand that. My counsel has an addendum to that question as well.

Ms. FERNANDEZ. One of the issues raised in your testimony is the definition of a person's residence is their usual place of residence. And you talk about maybe getting a count of homeless by identifying those people who identify themselves as being transient. But that doesn't cover the homeless situation in totality.

For example, there is testimony that says there are multiple families living in single-family dwellings and the Census Bureau and the census forms will be able to count them. However, you will only have a count of people who live in a residence, not people who may have sought out housing and were not able to find it.

Would it be possible for the Census Bureau to consider putting in questions similar to the ones that they do, for example, for information on employment. Have you been in the market for a job; have you been in a market for housing; when was the last time you looked for housing; are you discouraged from looking for housing? I think this approach would give us more information than would a single question asking, are you homeless? People don't want to necessarily identify themselves as being homeless, but I think the way the census is written now, wouldn't you agree that, in the broad sense of the definition of homeless, we are not really getting the total picture of that population?

Mr. HILL. You are quite right in one sense. We did not have the procedures that we had to have to identify the homeless per se. Our procedures on casual count and the others were really to help us get an accurate account. We weren't looking to define, and we don't have a definition of the homeless. You know that that isn't really settled as an issue.

As far as the questionnaire goes, I mean I hadn't thought of what you said before now, and it seems reasonable to me. Of course, you know that I don't decide those kinds of things.

Mr. GARCIA. Let me interrupt you at this point, if I may, and I don't want to be rude but there are people here who are from the Bureau of the Census. And they are monitoring this hearing very closely. And I would suggest and hope that while you are regional director, you will join with those of us from the New York metropolitan area to make that question that counsel is asking of you very clear to the people who have that responsibility at Census Headquarters in Washington.

Mr. HILL. It is always my pleasure to give them the reality that I live with.

Mr. GARCIA. I would just like to take this opportunity to say that I don't think we introduced the staff. Lillian Fernandez is the staff director of the Census and Population Subcommittee in the House of Representatives. Virginia Maya is part of my Washington staff, and she is involved with Federal housing programs. So, I just wanted to have the record indicate that.

Counsel would like to ask a further question.

Ms. FERNANDEZ. Bill, in your testimony you mentioned that on one evening the Census Bureau sends out enumerators to comb the tunnels of the Grand Central Station looking for persons to enumerate. This is definitely commendable in terms of the Census Bu-

reau's Outreach Program and looking out to make sure we count all persons and have good coverage.

How successful is that effort? We are also curious as to how frequent it is?

Mr. HILL. No, that was only done on the census, Ms. Fernandez.

Ms. FERNANDEZ. Just on the census day?

Mr. HILL. Yes.

We try to identify, again, any place where we thought, or heard about, or read, I had a file going for years on this issue. And then, of course, when the census time came we used all our ideas at once in order to count people.

It is very difficult to count people on the street. One reason is they keep moving, so that what you have to do is send out crews, so to speak, approach them properly and get as good and quick a count as you can because some of them are not always in the mood to be questioned.

Mr. GARCIA. Just let me interrupt again.

The census taking begins on April 1, the magic date is April 1, 1990. The bureau mails the forms out 2 weeks before that date. Correct me if I am wrong, but it is somewhere within that period. The census than goes on from April 1, and you try to button it up by September or October of that same year so that we can have some of that data ready as soon as possible for the reapportionment of the political subdivisions throughout the country.

Now, based on this, it seems to me that the homeless population is not as congregated in one place during that period of time that is, from April 1 thru September or even October 1990. But yet, if we took the census in January and February, when you can see the lines of people waiting to get into Grand Central Station in the evening, or when you see the number of people who are presently in shelters because of the sub-zero weather conditions, we would have two different counts.

And it just seems to me that some provisions should be made, even if we have to hold up the census, to count the homeless during this period and make an effort to count everyone, because this is when everybody is together. Most of the time they can sleep in a park. They can sleep anyplace if the weather conditions are right, but in the winter they generally congregate and end up in one spot.

Mr. HILL. Well, Mr. Chairman, that is the kind of idea that as you know would involve many, many decisions. But it is the kind of thing that we need to be thinking about because what we are trying to do is get an accurate count. We are not trying to make perfect a certain procedure, and I think that is a kind of helpful suggestion, and we need lots of those from lots of people in order to get our job done properly. And I think we are in the mood for this kind of thinking.

Mr. GARCIA. Well, I hope that your colleagues from the Census Headquarters in Washington are listening to our dialog today.

Mr. Dickens, and my two colleagues from the Hispanic Housing Coalition, you've got Mr. Hill here, who has been a good friend over all these years. You've got an opportunity to ask him some questions.

Is there anything that we have omitted, anything that you think we should be asking him? If so, please state it. And if not, I will ask Mr. Hill, as I have always asked in all my hearings, that if we come up with some questions over the next week or so that we can submit them to him in writing and that he will be kind enough to respond. So in this way, you won't think that you have missed this opportunity.

And then, we will make certain that those questions and answers are entered as part of this record that we are establishing today.

Mr. DICKENS. Is it all right for me to ask the first question?

Mr. GARCIA. It is all right for you to ask a question, Mr. Dickens.

Mr. DICKENS. Thank you.

My question is what innovation would you have in attempting to get to these here to fore uncounted people; as I stated; it is quite a problem when people live in places and they are ashamed of the places that they are living in, or don't answer doors for other reasons. I would suggest that we have a special training for the Census takers so that they can better investigate. Actually, for safety reasons, send them out in teams instead of one.

Would you respond to that?

Mr. HILL. Mr. Dickens, I read your statement before the hearing began, and I cannot say that I disagreed with anything that you put in your statement both as to training, both as to teamwork, even teams beyond teams—even small groups that I am choosing to call blitz teams at this point.

We did some of that in 1980 based on necessity. What I would like to see, and I am sure will see in 1990, is that we will plan this effort. That our publicity and our census takers on the street will be closer in time so that people realize here come the census takers we've been hearing about just last night or yesterday or this morning. And so, they will understand why these people are coming to their homes.

So, as I say, I read your statement and I find it very helpful, frankly. And I think you are right on the money.

Mr. MIRANDA. I have a question.

Despite all your outreach efforts, we have recommended that a community based organization be involved. And it is clear that in most of the ethnic communities in the city of New York there is a network of community organizations that people are aware of, they visit, they have a relationship with.

How will CBO's be involved in the 1990 census?

Mr. HILL. Well, I think it is very clear to me that we need help of everyone in terms of—publicity is a broad word, I would say education is a better word. To educate in the proper way, that is to say that one community may not hear a message in one particular way, but may hear it another way. This is where we need the advice and the counsel of what I will call broadly the community based organizations and community leaders.

But in addition to that, they can help us recruit for census takers, which is very important also. And we are going to be asking people to do this frankly. In fact, I think I have three friends here at the table, I know I have a friend right there, and I will be asking for your help. And I will be delighted to have it.

Mr. RIVERA. I have a question.

Mr. Hill, I would like to know if you have a strategy to enter our schools for the purpose of educating our children about the census.

Mr. HILL. Frankly, I already spoke to the curriculum people. I am not sure that I had the right topic, but I tried my best. That was about a month ago. The Bureau will have a full-scale curriculum package at various levels for the school children. As much as we tried in 1980, I think that we will even be a little better prepared and a little earlier this time. We will be doing it absolutely. It is a good idea.

Mr. GARCIA. I would like to thank the four of you very much for being with us. The three of you actually, because if you don't mind, Mr. Hill, I would appreciate if you would continue to stay there.

All of your statements will be entered in the record in their entirety. And when the report is finally issued, we will make certain that each of you receives a copy of the report as put forth by the subcommittee.

I would now like to call Dr. Sheree West, who is going to testify.

Mr. DICKENS. Mr. Chairman, may I just say that I would like to thank you before I leave and say that you are doing a good job.

Mr. GARCIA. Thank you very much, Mr. Dickens.

Dr. West, before you start, I would just like to make it clear that both you and Dr. Segundo Mercado-Llorens have submitted a statement. I also want to make it clear that the statement submitted by Mr. Mercado-Llorens, of the Coalition for a New Foreign Policy in Washington, will be entered into the record in its entirety. I understand that he could not be here with us today, but I wanted to clarify this matter.

STATEMENT OF DR. SHEREE L. WEST, CONSULTANT, NEW YORK CITY

Dr. WEST. I thank you kindly, and we appreciate the opportunity to discuss with you today characteristics of the homeless and recommendations for counting them in the 1990 census. Mr. Mercado-Llorens would very much have liked to have been here. He is involved with foreign policy lobbying in Capitol Hill, as you know, and was not able to come.

We know that over 100 Federal programs require census data for planning and allocating aid, and as you are very well aware, census data is used for allocating funds for housing assistance, and income assistance, and community development block grants, and a number of other housing and economic development programs—education. Every person not counted represents lost service funding, lost political representation, and acute needs that remain invisible.

Homeless people have the most acute needs of any group in the national population for income, for housing, for health care, for mental health services, for nutrition, employment and job training. It is in fact a new, "Grapes of Wrath." It is a modern day harvest of shame.

Mr. Mercado-Llorens, had he been here, wanted to tell this committee that he considers Federal budget policies toward the poor to be a form of economic terrorism whose consequence is homelessness. And indeed, Federal budget authority for the military has in-

creased by 37 percent since 1981, and budget authority for low-income programs, as I am sure you know, has been cut by 33 percent since 1981.

So, it turns out in New York City advocates for the homeless have to go to extraordinary lengths to even simply get medical care for homeless people in acute need. And it is our feeling that if the needs of homeless people could be represented and mechanisms developed for funding those needs that might be less of a struggle on a daily basis.

While this administration would like to hope that homelessness is localized in economically hard hit cities, and it will recede with economic recovery, studies from California, Phoenix, Denver, Ohio, and New York City, all confirm that homelessness is a national phenomenom. It is on the rise, and the homeless are an extraordinariiy diverse group of people that shatter any old stereotypes about alcoholic bums and derelicts on the street.

And homelessness is increasingly not only an urban phenomenon, but also suburban and rural. Homeless people are now teenagers, and they are elderly people. They are older people out on the streets walking with walkers and all their possessions. Crippled people who can hardly take care of themselves out on the streets and in the Pennsylvania Railroad Station. They are in acute need.

One of the most disturbing findings recently is the increase in the number of homeless families, and consequently, the number of children. In this city, more than half of the homeless are families with children. Families of unemployed, they are foreign families who have lost their homes, single-parent families who can no longer obtain shelter on their AFDC allowance. There are many undocumented immigrants and refugees. They live in cars, in abandoned and deteriorated buildings and makeshift dwellings. There are colonies of homeless who live in abandoned buildings and would probably be very hard to find by census enumerators.

I am going to skip through and not read all of this testimony because I know you have it, and it is not really necessary. I, in fact, had one question that comes to mind. You were asking for questions for Mr. Hill in regard to the Hispanic and undocumented aliens who may be living in doubled up families and tripled up families.

And I wonder if it would not be possible to remove the question from the census on alien status or naturalization status, if that might make people perhaps more willing to respond despite guarantees of confidentiality?

Mr. GARCIA. If I may just interrupt, I don't think Mr. Hill is in a position to answer that.

Dr. WEST. I know, but that is a point that I might suggest.

Mr. GARCIA. But I think there are people here from the Census Bureau who have heard your question and will take it back to Washington.

Dr. WEST. In fact, I am going to skip all the way down to the recommendations part of my testimony.

Certainly the problem that makes enumerating the homeless simply a technical challenge for the Census Bureau is their total problem of living. For trying to find the homeless and to count

them as thoroughly as possible, you would have to vary the approach with different kinds of homeless people.

It is certainly easier to count homeless people in shelter beds than out in the streets and in parks and tunnels and so forth. And I think the idea of trying to count them in the winter months is not a bad one, although there are still people living in the streets, and tunnels, and parks and abandoned buildings all year round. They are there in the wintertime as well.

There are many, many sandwich lines, soup lines, meal programs, all around the city. St. Francis Church at 7 o'clock in the morning. I would think this would be a good place to find homeless people who do not go to the shelters, because a lot of people who do live on the streets do come to the food lines. I think the potential for a duplicate count there may be a little higher, but probably the enumerators could take care of that in some way.

I think Mr. Hill spoke of working with social welfare agencies and community based organizations. My recommendation would be to work very closely with outreach teams who are directly involved with homeless people on the street. In Manhattan you have Project Reach Out and Midtown Outreach, as well as Project Help. These are teams who within a certain catchment area do work on the street directly with homeless people. They report that, however, they may have to work for 2 or 3 years gradually trying to build trust and some kind of contact with some homeless people. There will be some homeless people whom you will not be able to approach, and you will simply have to do a head count enumeration of maybe sex, race, and possible age category, or something very cursory.

There are intermittent homeless people. This is an issue I think will be very difficult. There are people who stay wherever they can. They sometimes stay with friends and relatives, they circulate around the city. They may stay in a shelter occasionally as a last resort. There is also a whole group of people who will not be counted as homeless, but are in effect homeless when they are released from detox centers, from revolving treatment beds, released from hospitals with no place to go, and from jails with no place to go.

Often they are released from hospitals and jails with no means of support, either because it takes a couple of months to get hooked up with SSI for some income means. And there are people who actually may be settled at a permanent address and so they will not be counted as homeless, but they are living in a unit that totally lacks any semblance of habitability.

I would like to tell you about a man whom I found who had lived for 20 years in an apartment in East Harlem. This apartment was totally uninhabitable. It had no electricity. There were holes in the ceiling to the sky. Not only was the window missing, but the brickwork frame around the window was missing. There was no plaster on the walls. The walls were bare lath. And yet, this man psychologically had a home and he did have a permanent address. But that man had no shelter.

So, I think in a course for census categories that person will not be counted as homeless, but it would be important to report people living in uninhabitable, unsafe dwellings so that these different categories of homeless people could be added up, could be tallied.

My understanding is that in the 1980 Census, although people were asked and there is a place on the form for "no usual place of residence," that there was actually no tally made. I find that quite unbelievable, but that is what I was told when I called the Census Bureau.

The closest category on the census for homeless people would be the transient and low-cost shelters, and I understand that they are categorized in group quarters, "other." And that seems to me to be an ironic misnomer at least. So, I would recommend a breaking down and differentiating of different categories of people who have no settled address. That would be very helpful, at least to break out those who stay in public and private shelters and missions, low-cost flop houses. And then, to have a separate recording of people who simply dwell in the open air on the streets and the parks in natural formations, and have no actual shelter at all.

I trust the professionalism and the commitment of the Census Bureau to find people in those places where they can be found to be gathered in some way in shelters, soup lines, the flop houses, the missions. It is the people who are dwelling in makeshift, inconspicuous created spaces in basements and abandoned buildings, in the cellars of grocery stores, under railroad overpasses and bridge approaches that will be difficult to find. For these people, I think a special cadre of enumerators should be assigned to scour the city and to really look for those kinds of places and those kinds of people.

And you see, most areas of the country and even most areas of the city, do not have outreach organizations on the street in the way that we have Project Reach Out and Midtown Outreach. I think that the public citizens could be enlisted, who are aware of people who are settled and who circulate around the neighborhood areas. They could be asked to help the Census Bureau to know that those people should be counted because it is very difficult to find people like that. They are mobile, although they may stay in a certain neighborhood. So I think the public could be an ally in this search.

As I said before, there are people for whom an interview won't be possible. And I think a simple head count should be sufficient. And there will be people who do not want to be approached, who are very wary and simply will not be responsive. I think some people may have concerns for the illegality of their residential situation, if they are undocumented aliens, or if they are illegally sharing an apartment unit in violation of zoning and health safety codes. Doubled- or tripled-up families may be wary of being discovered or evicted. I think you can go so far with reassurances of confidentiality, but you will probably still not catch everybody that way.

You have already spoken of barriers of language and literacy. Certainly Spanish-speaking enumerators and in some cities Asian speaking enumerators as well would be helpful.

There are other more sophisticated techniques called Bernouli Sampling that involve a repeated sampling of mobile populations, and marking them or tagging them in some way and then repeating the sample until you find out how many you are finding who

have been counted and have not been counted. And it is possible then statistically to estimate how many people you have missed.

It may be that accurately counting the number of homeless in our country will make it less possible to ignore and deny their acute needs. It is important to count them, but I think we shouldn't be distracted by issues of methodology. It is still 4 years to the 1990 census, and once we know how many homeless there are, there will still be the same acute needs that there are now. It is growing at a rate of 20 to 25 percent a year.

It is a national problem. I think we know the simple, obvious steps that need to be taken to deal with the homeless. And I hope that we will not be distracted by concerns about methodology and technique from the really acute need. Thank you.

Mr. GARCIA. I would like to thank you, Dr. West, and just let me say to you that I would hope that the people from the Census would make use of your counsel. And I would hope that they would rely on your counsel because I think your presentation today was both sensitive and realistic. I really want to thank you, because as I said to my counsel here, your testimony is factual and real and at the same time, you are not painting any exaggerated pictures. You are just telling it the way it is. And so, we appreciate it very much. I am going to make some recommendations to the Bureau of the Census because we need your sensitivity.

Thank you so much for being with us today.

Dr. WEST. Thank you kindly.

[The prepared statement follows:]

SHEREE L. WEST, Ph.D. and SEGUNDO A. MERCADO-LLORENS

TOWARD THE 1990 CENSUS OF HOMELESS PERSONS

Mr. Chairman and Members of this Committee:

We thank you for the opportunity to discuss today characteristics of homeless people and recommendations for counting them in the 1990 Census.

Over 100 federal programs require Census data for planning or allocating aid. Every person not counted represents lost service funding, lost political representation, and acute needs that remain invisible.

Census data is used in allocating funds for housing, for income assistance, in formulas for Community Development Block Grants, in dispensing aid to schools for educational programs, school construction, for child nutrition, for educationally deprived poor children, for adult and vocational education. It is used in allocating assistance to the aged, in funding medical care and health facilities, mental health services, employment and training programs, community planning and development assistance, as well as in general revenue sharing.

Homeless people have the most acute needs of any group in the national population—for income, housing, health care, mental health services, nutrition, employment and job training. When the homeless are not counted, their needs are unrepresented. This is tragic for them and a disservice to the cities, counties, and states which have the immediate obligation to meet their service needs.

In New York City for example, advocates must go to extraordinary lengths to obtain acutely needed medical attention for a homeless person. If homeless people were counted, and their needs represented through funding mechanisms, this might be less of a struggle.

Of course the Census is also used for apportionment of political representation. Uncounted homeless people are no one's political constituents. Advocates for the homeless have been bluntly told by unresponsive legislators, "The homeless don't vote." A more accurate count of the homeless may help redress this 'out of sight, out of mind' philosophy.

This administration would like to hope that homelessness is localized in economically hard-hit cities, and that it will recede with economic recovery. But studies from California, Phoenix, Denver, Ohio, and New York City confirm that homelessness is a national phenomenon and one that is still on the rise. They indicate an extraordinary diversity among homeless people that shatters old stereotypes of alcoholic skid-row bums. Homelessness is not only an urban phenomenon, it is also now rural. Homeless individuals and families come from a variety of social and economic backgrounds. They are teenagers; they are elderly, and they are men and women in their 20s, 30s, and 40s. They are able-bodied unemployed as well as physically or mentally disabled.

One of the most disturbing recent findings is the increase in the number of homeless <u>families</u>, and consequently the number of <u>children</u> living in uncertainty and deprivation. These are families of the unemployed, or farm families who have lost their homes, single-parent families who can no longer obtain shelter on a meager AFDC allowance, and undocumented immigrants or refugees. They live in cars, in

congregate shelters, hotels, motels, in tents along rivers, in recreational vehicles on public lands, in abandoned deteriorating buildings, and makeshift dwellings in building basements.

In New York City there were official reports of 54,400 homeless people accommodated in public shelters or welfare hotels in fiscal 1985. This figure included 28,000 individuals and 8,000 families, but it leaves uncounted all those living in the streets, parks, and rooftops, homeless people in private and church-sponsored shelters, the estimated 130,000 families doubled and tripled up, and those living in makeshift or uninhabitable dwellings.

The causes of homelessness in this city are hardly mysterious: An extreme shortage of housing units in the lower rent ranges, lack of income to pay for housing, overcrowding, deinstitutionalization or refusal of treatment for the mentally ill, and real estate development policies that replace the poor with a new gentry.

In this city where almost half (46%) of the population make less than $15,000 per year, 60 to 90% of households earning under $10,000 pay more than 40% of their income for rent. More than 70% of households receiving public assistance pay more than 40% of their income for rent.

Against this income picture there is an acute shortage of affordable housing units. The vacancy rate in most rent classes below $200 per month is less than one percent. The number of vacant units with rents below $300 declined by more than 11,000 units between 1981 and 1984. More than 110,000 low-cost SRO hotel units, or 87% of the total, were lost in New York City between 1970 and 1980, due to tax abatements and co-op/condo conversions.

Thus, as one report states, "314,000 renter households with incomes less than $6,500 who were not living in public housing were competing with each other for the 50,000 (non-rent controlled) nonpublic housing units in the city that rented for less than $150 a month" (Stegman, p. 146).

In total, an estimated 622,600 new or rehabilitated dwelling units are required in New York City to meet current housing needs (Felstein & Knepper, 1985). In the face of this housing crisis, the budget President Reagan proposes for Fiscal Year 1987 is brutal. It effectively eliminates the little federal housing assistance remaining in the national budget. $4.4 billion of HUD funding already approved for assisted housing in 1986 is to be rescinded. An additional $2.3 billion would be deferred, and would be the only Federal housing assistance planned for Fiscal Year 1987.

In this context, the number of homeless accommodated in New York City public shelters recently set a new record of 9,396 individuals on a single night. And there are now 4110 homeless families, of approximately 15,207 people (10,190 children) in hotels, congregate shelters or family centers in the City. That is 24,603 homeless people on one night. More than half of the homeless in this city are families with children.

An estimated 1/4 to 1/2 of the homeless, nationwide, are psychiatrically disabled (American Psychiatric Association, 1984). The homeless are disproportionately minorities, because they are much more susceptible to the causes of homelessness: low income and poor housing. Unemployment, displacement, evictions or fires, rent increases, unsafe/unhealthy housing, an insufficient AFDC allowance, and federal entitlement cutbacks all contribute to homelessness among minorities.

Many of the homeless, both individuals and families, had been living with friends or families just before they became homeless. This underscores the high risk for the estimated 130,000 families who are doubled or tripled up in New York City apartments because of the lack of affordable housing. The new HUD plan to evict from public housing and to deny federal housing assistance to undocumented aliens will certainly create more homeless families in this city.

This general review of the characteristics of the homeless suggests the magnitude of the problem. Given current trends and the scale of public responses we do not anticipate the problem of homelessness will have disappeared by 1990. We will turn now to suggestions that may help to improve the accuracy of the count of the homeless in the 1990 Census.

Counting the Homeless--Enumeration Difficulties:

Precisely because they have 'no settled address' the homeless are a challange for the Census to enumerate. We do not underestimate the magnitude of this methodological problem. We respect the professionalism of the Bureau of Census staff and this Subcommittee in anticipating the issue and trying to respond to it. From our experience we can anticipate some difficulties in attempting to count homeless individuals and families, and suggest approaches that may improve the 1990 count of the homeless.

Methods should vary for the type of homeless. Efforts to count all people at soup kitchens, on sandwich lines, in all the public shelters, private shelters, family centers, drop-in centers, in the churches and synagogues in the network of the Partnership for the Homeless, in flophouses, missions and transportation terminals should continue. In

New York City searches of each subway station rather than simply the ends of the lines would be warranted.

Certainly counting shelter beds will be easier than finding people in the streets and parks. Meal programs and sandwich lines will attract a number of street dwelling people who do not stay in shelters, though there may be some potential for duplicated counts.

The biggest enumeration problem is to make visible the invisible homeless, those who are very mobile, or are highly committed to remaining inconspicuous:

- The inaccessibility, and inconspicuousness of found and created shelters will pose a formidable challenge to enumerators to identify as 'residences.' Shelter can be found under railroad and highway overpasses, bridge approaches, in parks, culverts, dumpsters, steam tunnels, doorways and grates on the street, in abandoned buildings, on rooftops, in tunnels, chicken-wire rooms in basements, and converted cellars of grocery stores. Obviously they are often in commercial or industrial areas, not only in so-called residential areas.

- Many homeless are exceedingly wary. Their concerns are for survival. Many have had largely negative experiences with official or institutional contacts. They have learned to make themselves very inconspicuous.

- An estimated 1/4 to 1/2 of those dwelling on the streets have serious mental or emotional problems. Some of these people avoid all other people, particularly strangers or official contacts. Outreach workers report trying slowly to build trust for 2 to 3 years before contact is allowed with some long term street- or park-dwelling mentally ill.

Some people will have concerns for the illegality of their residential situation—if they are undocumented aliens, or illegally sharing an apartment unit, or in violation of zoning or health and safety codes.Doubled and tripled up families or sub-families may feel vulnerable to discovery and eviction. These people should show up in the usual household census, if assured of privacy. We know that many are at

the margin of homelessness since this is a frequent living arrangement just prior to a shelter for many.

The recent policy announcement by HUD rendering it illegal to grant federal housing assistance to undocumented aliens, or to allow them to reside in federally subsidized housing will certainly create more homelessness. The Public Housing Authority of New York estimates that 20% or roughly 34,000 of the 170,000 public housing units are occupied by doubled or tripled up families. At current rent and income levels these families have absolutely no other place to go!

Language and literacy will pose barriers. When confronted with an official form, many poor and less educated will not fill it out without assistance.

In some contexts it is not possible to distinguish a homeless person from a non-homeless person. Sometimes they are able to dress acceptably, keep moving, and blend in, for example in an all-night diner or movie house.

Season and weather will have an impact. In winter months, homeless people are driven further into hiding. April may be a transition month between winter and summer, when people will begin to be more visible.

Public officials often use the term 'truly' homeless to mean only those living on the street or in shelters. The truly homeless should include all those others who have no habitable, secure place to live. Many people are <u>in effect homeless</u>, but will not be counted as such because of Census procedures and categories:

- There are intermittent homeless--those who stay whereever they can, sometimes on a friend's floor or couch, in found or created spaces, or back and forth between a hospital and the streets, and only use public shelters as a last resort.
- Those who are temporarily housed in institutions, or in 'revolving treatment beds,' in jails, detox centers, youth homes, or hospitals, but actually have no other shelter or place to go when they leave.
- A person may actually have settled at the same address for some time but reside in a unit lacking any semblance of habitability. One eighty year old man we recently encountered had lived for 20 years in an East Harlem apartment. Ceiling holes opened to the sky; walls were bare unplastered lath; an entire window with its brickwork frame was missing, and there was no electricity at all. This gentleman certainly had a permanent address. Given its meaning to him, he may have a psychological 'home.' He would not be counted as homeless, but he hardly had shelter.

Further Recommendations:

Outreach workers involved directly with homeless people on the streets, in meal programs, and the staff of drop-in centers should be 'deputized' or sworn as enumerators, and empowered to count those homeless who will be unable or unwilling to be interviewed or to complete a form.

For some very disturbed or wary homeless, an interview will not be possible. A simple headcount by observation, perhaps including sex, race, and estimated age will be all that will be possible. Outreach workers report that it can take 2 to 3 years to develop a measure of

trust and contact with some street dwelling mentally ill homeless. Even though these outreach workers are continually on the street and circulating in likely sites, they report that individuals who have been homeless for a long time but not previously seen, continue to appear.

Close planning consultation with local outreach groups who work directly with the homeless on the streets, such as Project Reach Out and the Midtown Outreach Project can help immeasurably to identify sites and specific individuals. They could also assist in training enumerators in methods of approach to homeless individuals. However, even in cities with strong advocacy organizations, many geographic areas will remain uncovered by such outreach efforts.

In some contexts, homeless people themselves may be enlisted to aid in counting other homeless.

A special cadre of highly committed and trained enumerators should be hired to scour local communities, abandoned buildings, and industrial areas to identify the niches and makeshift dwelling places that homeless individuals have constructed.

Enlist the aid of the public in the community, for the many areas not covered by outreach workers. Citizens know of homeless persons who are mobile, but circulate within a local community. These people could be identified to the local Census Bureau, for counting purposes only, with assurances of non-intrusion.

Absolute privacy of information on sites and people must be assured repeatedly and strongly.

A large number of the doubled up families, and those living in illegal, converted spaces are likely to be non-English speakers. Many Spanish speaking enumerators should be hired to go door to door in some

poor neighborhoods to explain, interpret forms, and reassure of absolute confidentiality. Pre-census Spanish-language spots on radio and t.v. will reach some. In some cities, Chinese, Korean, and Viet Namese speaking enumerators would be helpful.

As on the Mission night in the 1980 Census, finding the homeless will not be a 9 to 5 job. Night work will be necessary.

In the 1980 Census, people found in parks and on subway trains on Mission night were reported in the category of "group quarters, non-institutional," an ironic misnomer at best. The sub-category 'low-cost transient' is now the closest approximation to 'homeless.' The category system should be more finely differentiated. The variety and inventiveness possible would doubtless strain the most detailed category system, yet one should be developed, in consultation with the National Coalition for the Homeless.

Caution:

Accurately counting the number of homeless persons in our country may make it less possible to ignore or deny the acute need of hundreds of thousands--in fact millions--of American citizens. It is certainly important to count them, and to represent their needs in our planning processes. Even if very sophisticated sampling techniques are employed, some homeless will still no doubt remain uncounted.

But we should not be distracted by issues of methodology, or arguments over the accuracy of counts. The human needs are acute. Homelessness is a critical national problem that is continuing to rise. Urgent needs for immediate, concrete help will not wait for the results of a Census conducted four years from now. The Homeless Persons Survival Act recently introduced would recognize that homelessness is now a national crisis that requires immediate federal action. The bill would provide for emergency relief, for preventive measures, and for long term solutions to homelessness. We know the decent and obvious steps necessary if we have the will to help.

Mr. GARCIA. I would now like to call up the Commissioner of the Department of Housing Preservation and Development, Anthony B. Gliedman, who has been very patient in waiting.

So that the record is clear and I will publicly say that at the end of this month he is going to new pastures. And I just want you to know, on behalf of the subcommittee, that we wish you all the luck in the world because you have been one heck of a good Housing Commissioner. You have made a big difference to thousands of people in this city, and I would like you to know that wherever you go, we are with you.

And having said that, just let me go a step further. We have your statement and would like you to summarize it. We know you are pressed for time so we will enter your statement in the record. There are several questions that we would like to ask you before you disappear from the city. But I know you really will never disappear.

Mr. GLIEDMAN. I hope not.

Mr. GARCIA. You will always be here with us. But why don't you summarize you statement, Commissioner, and then we will take it from there.

STATEMENT OF ANTHONY GLIEDMAN, COMMISSIONER, DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Mr. GLIEDMAN. First, I would like to just say one thing, during my 6½ years as a Housing Commissioner of New York and trying to solve the unsolvable and house the homeless and all the other contradictions as part of that job, Mr. Chairman, there is nobody that I have received more help from, advice, counsel, and assistance, than the chair of this particular subcommittee in all the various roles that you have, Bob, and I think the people of the city of New York and the people of the United States owe you a debt of gratitude for your sensitivity and your concern ranging from H.R. 1 to this conference today, to all that you have done to help rebuild the South Bronx.

So, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. GARCIA. Thank you.

Mr. GLIEDMAN. As you indicated, my testimony is already there so I don't think that I need to go through that individually. But New York City, obviously faces a series of crises, some of which are related to this very directly. The housing crisis clearly is directly related to a series of policies, ranging from the undercount of the Census Bureau to the more direct ones of the housing programs having been stripped of so much of their moneys.

I mean, we have seen the housing programs decreased by over a third already, and that was likely to continue. Some of those are related to Census Bureau issues in terms of our share—the little that is left. And the Census Bureau obviously also provides us in New York with a particularly valuable tool in helping to structure our housing policy.

As you know we have a $1.4 million contract that we have just entered into with the Census Bureau to provide us special information about New York City, which is based upon both the 1980 census, as well as an update to be performed next year. And we are

very happy to have the Census Bureau helping us in that. But obviously, the stronger our basis in terms of the 1990 census, the better the information that we will have for the future. And New York City is a unique city in a number of ways.

We have a number of unique factors. Amongst them, obviously, is the fact that we are a city of renters, and that the whole apartment house phenomenon, and the multiple dwelling phenomenon is one that is present here as it is no place else in the country. There is no other city that has even half of its people living in rented housing. New York City has over two-thirds, and almost three-quarters of its population living in rented housing. And over and above that, you have the whole cooperative movement. So, you are talking about 75 to 80 percent of the stock living in multifamily housing. That is a unique problem for the Census Bureau, and frankly, it is a problem that they have tried to face with, I think, mixed results at best in 1980.

Second, obviously, everybody has focused on the difficulty of counting the minority populations in the city. New York obviously has a high minority population, and when you translate those into citywide statistics, you can see that so many of our people are not being counted. I understand that the pep results indicate an undercount of at least 525,000 or so people. I mean, that is an incredible amount of people to miss. And clearly, that causes policies to be bad from the Federal Government to the State government to the local governments.

It causes all of us to make decisions based upon inaccurate data, which is obviously what we are here today to try to prevent from happening. Blacks were undercounted nationally. Hispanics were undercounted nationally, and obviously undocumented aliens. And listening to Dr. West's testimony, another very important population, which I know this committee is focusing on today, is the homeless and subbranches of that. Because while there are a number of people that are homeless day, to day, to day, to day; there are a number of homeless that are part-time homeless, if you will. They spend some time doubled up and tripled up in somebody else's house.

And one of the very difficult things for the Census Bureau, and frankly one that I don't think has been done well, is the doubled up aspect of it. The households that are sharing apartments. And that is very difficult, because often the owner if he found out about it, would throw out one of the two families under the law. Because the law has its requirements, and we must somehow break through that, Mr. Chairman, to be able to get an account for those people that are doubled up.

We think today that there may be well over 100,000 households doubled up in New York City, and I don't believe that the vast majority of those show up anywhere in the Census Bureau statistics. The lists used by the Census Bureau have a basis flaw. They really don't have apartment designations on them by and large. And as I said, when you are dealing with apartment houses and renters, that is very important I believe.

In many cases, it has been documented to us and I believe it to be accurate, that piles of forms are simply left in the lobby as one of the means of being able to outreach to people. And as Dr. West

indicated, often people are living in buildings that the enumerator, if they don't come from that particular neighborhood, might think it is not even being lived in. But unfortunately, with our housing crisis, they are being lived in. I know my people, I must admit, are sometimes surprised to find a squatter family in a building. And if it happens to our folks, who are professionals, I am sure that it happens the Census enumerators, who are obviously part-time people initially.

We believe that it is important that the Census Bureau work closer in New York City and other unique localities to come up with a list of target populations and groups and methodologies that are particularly suited to the locality. To have a 10-day period at the end to be able to comment is, frankly, insufficient. I think we should be much more involved in the beginning. We should be much more involved at the end, and at the end, I think we should also have more than just a few days to be able to talk about undercount issues in a city the size of New York and as complex as New York.

We have, for example, in both the city and the State, lists of tenants in rent stabilized buildings. We have the number of apartments in these buildings. We have unit designations in many cases for these buildings, and so, if it is possible to work out over a period of a year or two beforehand, a dialog, we can help find many of the people. Because they are not hidden in many of the cases, Mr. Chairman, they are there. You just have to know where to look, and you have to know how many apartments are there; and you have to know the apartment layouts. And you also have to be able to break through the undercount involved with doubling up.

I think that there has to be a greater use of personal interviews. For example, in the inner city neighborhoods, we have a less than 50-percent return rate by mail. I am not sure, and when you leave material simply in the lobby, it is a tiny fraction of that, I believe. I believe that we might want to in some neighborhoods, Mr. Chairman, almost cut out that step of the mail. It may simply be cost efficient for us to go in and do the neighborhood.

And another factor in that is that I think the interviews can in fact break through this doubling up issue. And in fact, it is just too easy and personal if you do fill out something left under your door or in the lobby, just to check the box and ignore the fact that there is another family living with you for the last 4 months and some day they are going to get an apartment, but right now they don't have one.

The homeless population count, we are obviously very disturbed about. We would like I think much more information from the Census Bureau on this. It is an issue that wasn't invented in the 1980's, and yet we are I think much more knowledgeable at it now than we were in the 1970's. And I think it is time that we begin to adapt our forms and procedures accordingly.

We think between the Human Resources Administration and HPD, the Housing Preservation Development Department, that we can help locate substantial pockets of homeless families. I mean raining from your 10 cities and the lower East Side to buildings where we know there are squatters. They don't show up on any list, but we know that they are there. And neighborhoods where we

think that probably one out of every four buildings has a squatter family in it periodically.

We know that they are there, and I think we can help find those people and be able to make a difference. We have today in an official homeless population—in other words, the ones in shelters—around 4,000 or 4,200 families, something like that. So, that is around 16,000 individuals. And we have just under 10,000, about 9,100 or 9,200 individuals that are in shelters, for a total official population of about 25,000 individuals without a permanent place of abode.

But as I say, how many other people are doubled up that will declare themselves homeless, or are possible candidates for declaring themselves homeless. Unless we find them in advance, they are going to be homeless soon because either they are going to have another child, or something else is going to happen to push that family out to become homeless. Unless we know that they are there in advance and we are able to adjust our processes and programs accordingly, we are going to see that population double and triple in the years to come.

The formats used to count transients: T-night and M-night in 1980, I think were certainly courageous efforts, but frankly, I thought they fell well short of what they might be able to be with a closer cooperation with the locality. And it is a cooperation that I know on behalf of myself and the mayor, we are more than happy to offer.

There are a number of other points, Mr. Chairman, but I think most of those are covered by my testimony. And so, if I may, I would like to make myself available for any questions that you may have.

Mr. GARCIA. Yes.

To the best of your knowledge, how bad were we affected in 1980 by the undercount in terms of Federal Housing Funds?

Mr. GLIEDMAN. Well, I understand that the total amount of funds was around $52 million. In terms of housing, I would have to find that number out for you, Bob, but it is in the tens of millions of dollars.

Mr. GARCIA. How many families, just an estimate, do you think we have in public housing that are doubled up?

Mr. GLIEDMAN. Well, we think there is around 50,000, give or take 10. It could be as high as 60,000.

Mr. GARCIA. And how does that compare, let's say to 1980?

Mr. GLIEDMAN. We think that is substantially more than there were in 1980.

Mr. GARCIA. So, there has been a tremendous increase between 1980 and 1986?

Mr. GLIEDMAN. Absolutely, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. GARCIA. And it all stems from what has happened in Washington over the last 5 years, in terms of the housing programs just being cut at the knees.

Is that a fair statement?

Mr. GLIEDMAN. I think that is a very large part of it. You can see it. I mean, we used to be receiving three to four thousand new units of public housing a year. And now, I think last year's allocation was—you won't believe this—50 units for the city of New

York. And in fact, when that translated into real dollars it was 15 units for the city of New York. We have today 200,000 households on the public housing authority waiting list. So, at 15 units a year, I am sure somebody can calculate what kind of a backlog that is.

Mr. GARCIA. In 1980, the census cost us approximately $1.2 billion. In 1990, the expense is obviously going to be higher. It is just natural.

You made several recommendations in your testimony and as I said before, Mr. Bill Hill's, responses are quite limited because he is a Regional Director and it is in Washington where they call the shots. But we also have here today, several people from the Washington office who have been monitoring this meeting. I hope that they have a chance to read your statement as they go back to Washington, because it appears to me that some of your recommendations should be followed up.

I just want them to know that if there is any person who knows what is going on in the city of New York, in terms of how we are going to get an accurate count, it is Commissioner Gleidman. I would just hope that before the record is completed—because this record will probably not be completed for another 60 days—the statement is read back at Suitland, MD, which is the headquarters for the Bureau of the Census.

Does my counsel have any questions?

Ms. FERNANDEZ. The only statement I would like to make on the issue that you raised regarding the use of the mail out/mail back procedures in inner city areas, is that the subcommittee recently had a hearing on the address compilation list, which is critical for the success of that procedure. We have asked the Census Bureau to examine other options than the mail out/mail back, specifically for the urban depressed areas and communities where you have a high illiteracy rate, where you don't have mailboxes where people could receive census forms. We have asked them to examine alternative procedures. And we will also ask them to look at the recommendations you have made here in your testimony.

Mr. GLIEDMAN. Very good.

The illiteracy rate is a major factor. The multi-language aspect of the city of New York, particularly, I think there are something like 208 languages spoken in New York. It is obviously very difficult, and when you try to do that by mail, it is just obviously impossible.

And obviously, there is also the fear of Government, which is compounded by the decision the other day on throwing illegal aliens out of public housing, and making the city of New York the means of doing that and other housing authorities the means of doing that. Obviously, that just makes it more and more difficult for the Census Bureau, for HPD, or the housing authority to do our jobs when we become the enemy. And I think that is the kind of thinking that got us into this kind of problem in the first place.

Mr. GARCIA. Commissioner, we want to thank you, and as I said before you started your testimony, I really wish you good luck.

Mr. GLIEDMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. It was my pleasure.

Mr. GARCIA. There were several other persons who were scheduled to testify. They are not here, and so, we are going to call this hearing to a close. We would like to thank everybody who partici-

pated, and especially you, Mr. Hill, for being patient and bearing with us.

Mr. HILL. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 12:15 p.m., the hearing in the above-entitled matter was concluded.]

[The prepared statements follow:]

Statement of Anthony Gliedman, Commissioner
Department of Housing Preservation and Development
City of New York
to the Subcommittee on Census and Population
of the Committee on the Post Office and Civil Service
House of Representatives
April 11, 1986

Mr. Chairman, I am Anthony Gliedman, Commissioner of the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) of the City of New York. HPD is the city's principal agency for developing and implementing housing policies and programs for people in the city. For its continuous efforts to improve the quality of existing housing units and to increase the number of affordable new housing units in the city, HPD needs complete and accurate data on the housing inventory and the residents in the city, both of which have been in the process of profound economic and demographic transformations. In my testimony today, I will highlight several fundamental problems that affected the quality and usefulness of the 1980 decennial census in counting people and housing units in the City of New York and I will make recommendations for remedying these problems in the 1990 census.

A. Disproportionate Undercount in New York City

The decennial census results are extremely important because they determine the apportionment of seats in the House of Representatives and they affect the distribution of billions of dollars in federal funds annually. The importance of the decennial census to governments at all levels, and ultimately to the nation's citizens, demands that every person be counted accurately. Unfortunately, however, as the Census Bureau acknowledges, it did not count every person or every unit in 1980. As you are no doubt aware, New York City was disproportionately undercounted in the 1980 census.

1. Magnitude of Undercount

According to the random telephone survey conducted by a private survey firm in 1980, conservative estimates of the overall undercount in 1980 for New York City range from 517,000 to 650,000. About 8 percent of New York City's population was not counted by the Census Bureau.[1] The Bureau's Post-Enumeration

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[1]Carey v. Klutznick, 508 F.Supp. 420 (1980).

Program (PEP) 2-9 estimated that New York City was undercounted at the rate of 7.39 percent.

According to the most recent estimates for the total resident population, including undocumented aliens, the overall nationwide undercount of the 1980 decennial census was 1.8 percent or 4,251,000 people. The undercount was principally among blacks and other racial minorities. Blacks were undercounted nationwide at the net rate of 5.7 percent (8.4 percent for male blacks; 15.6 percent for male blacks between the ages of 25 and 54).[1]

According to the 1980 census, in New York City, there is a large concentration of blacks, Hispanics, and undocumented aliens--groups that the Census Bureau has found especially hard to count under its enumeration techniques. For example, while blacks comprise 11.7 percent of the population counted nationally, they comprise 25.2 percent of the population in New York City.[2]

The 1980 census shows that Hispanics comprise 19.9 percent of the city's population but only 6.4 percent of the nation's population. Moreover, New York City Hispanics are undercounted at higher rates than Hispanics are nationally.[3]

Among concerned survey specialists, including those at the Census Bureau, it is undisputed that there is a disproportionate number of undocumented aliens in New York City.

According to the PEP 2-9 estimate, the differential amount between the nationwide undercounting rate and the New York City undercounting rate was 5.83 percent. Based on overwhelming evidence presented in the case of Carey v. Klutznick, Judge Walker held that "there has been an undercount of the population of New York City . . . that is disproportionate to the national average."

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[1]Memo from J.S. Passel and J.G. Robinson, Population Analysis Staff to Roger Herriot, Chief, Population Division, U.S. Bureau of the Census, (Subject: Revised Demographic Estimates of the Coverage of the Population by Age, Sex, and Race in the 1980 Census).

[2]Plaintiff's Memorandum after Trial on Remand, Cuomo v. Baldridge (S.D.N.Y. 1984), p. 42.

[3]Ibid., p. 44.

2. Evaluation of Coverage Improvement Programs for the 1980 Census

The Census Bureau spent an estimated $342 million (about 34 percent of the total cost of $1 billion) in 1980 to decrease the undercount by about 0.7 percent (from 2.5 percent in the 1970 census to 1.8 percent in the 1980 census).[1] It is becoming quite costly to reduce the undercount in decennial censuses. More importantly, putting additional money into future censuses will probably not significantly improve the enumeration, particularly in central cities where "hard-to-count" population groups are disproportionately concentrated, unless sufficient improvements are made in coverage improvement programs, which are designed to deal with such groups.

There were two major sources of coverage errors in the 1980 census methods.

The first source of errors was the manner in which Census Bureau address data were prepared. The outcome of the census depends largely on the completeness and accuracy of its address data. The Master Address Register (MAR) for urban areas was compiled from commercial mailing lists, which were often incomplete or inaccurate. The private vendor lists covered about 59 percent of the addresses in New York City. Moreover, the lists frequently lacked apartment unit designations. This lack caused a serious problem in many large cities because, according to the 1970 census, approximately 50 percent of the people in central cities live in multiple dwellings. The 1980 census indicated that about 67 percent of the persons in New York City lived in multiple dwellings with three or more units. The Post Office Updates, one of the coverage improvement programs the Census Bureau implemented, was expected to improve the MAR by only 25 percent because the quality of the review depends basically on the quality of the MAR. The Precanvas Operation, the other procedure designed to improve the MAR, was the only quality-control check for the Postal Service review. Thus, unless there is a review procedure that can improve the MAR

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[1]Memo from J.S. Passel and J.G. Robinson to R.A. Herriot; U.S. Comptroller General, A $4 Billion Census in 1990? Report to the Congress of the United States (Washington, D.C.: United States General Accounting Office, February 22, 1982).

significantly before precanvas, it is reasonable to expect, even before enumeration begins, a serious undercount problem.[1]

The second source of errors was the manner in which the mail-out/mail-back method was implemented in 1980. Instead of placing questionnaire forms in mail boxes or under dwelling unit doors, many forms were simply left in apartment building lobbies, creating innumerable problems, from a failure to return forms at all to returning forms for units other than those to which they were sent. In New York City, the city-wide mail return rate in 1980 was 72 percent. In inner-city neighborhoods, such as Bedford-Stuyvesant, the rate was only 48 percent.[2]

The above problems with 1980 census methods were derived from developing and implementing methods without seriously taking into consideration the economic, social, and housing characteristics of disadvantaged minority groups and aliens living in distressed inner-city neighborhoods. These people suffer from lack of education and poor language abilities. They have irregular living arrangements, such as several families sharing one unit; single men with no clearly fixed place of residence; living with a group related by kin or common place of origin; taking in household boarders. They fear that revealing information about family or group members may jeopardize their eligibility for government income-transfer programs or may provoke a landlord. Illegal aliens, who may be affected by all of the above, fear in particular that the government will discover their unlawful status.[3]

3. Recommendations for 1990 Census Coverage Improvement Programs

In light of the problems with 1980 census methods and the causes of these problems described above, I recommend the following three major changes in methods for the 1990 census. To prepare a more complete address list, make the mail-out/mail-back procedure more effective, and check the reliability

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[1]Carey v. Klutznick, 508 F.Supp. 420 (1980).

[2]Ibid.

[3]Ibid.

of data collected--more meaningful formal cooperation and coordination between the Census Bureau and local governments should be established, without creating the possibility of violating the principle of confidentiality, as follows:

a. Have local governments review the number of people and housing units, not their addresses, covered in the MAR. This should be done after the Post Office Update and before the Precanvas Operation. Many local government agencies maintain valuable data and information that can help the Census Bureau in its efforts to improve the MAR by checking changes that have occurred since 1980 in the housing inventory of many inner-city neighborhoods. To maximize the ability of local governments to prepare complete address data sets, large central cities should classify geographically neighborhoods or areas where hard-to-count populations are highly concentrated. The Census Bureau should then define these targeted hard-to-count areas into census tracts or enumeration districts before local governments' review of MARs refined by Post Offices. Armed with these geographical boundaries, local governments can determine in a relatively short period of time the completeness and accuracy of the Census Bureau's address lists prepared for precanvas. Local goverments may need about three or four weeks for this participation.

   This pre-enumeration participation by local goverments can also greatly improve the Non-household Sources Program developed for the reduction of differential undercoverage of minority populations. In 1980, the program was based on matching independent lists of names and corresponding addresses with the 1980 census during the actual enumeration. The lists were received from the Department of Motor Vehicles, the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, and the 1979 New York City Public Assistance File. By working together more closely with local governments in a planned, well-structured framework, the lists can be significantly cleaned before matching them with the enumeration.

b. Enumeration of people in hard-to-count areas mentioned above should be done from the beginning by personal interviewers rather than the mail-out/mail-back method. Given the fact that the mail-

back rate was extremely low in these areas (48 percent in Bedford-Stuyvesant) and interviewers were thus sent to a great number of units in such areas for follow-up work, the adoption of the enumerator method rather than the mail-back method in very distressed inner-city neighborhoods will undoubtedly increase substantially the coverage rate and accuracy level at relatively low additional costs.

c. Objectives of the Local Review Program (post-enumeration) used for the 1980 census were intended to invite participation by local government officers in reviewing and improving the accuracy of census counts. However, in 1980 the local officers were asked to review census counts and to respond, noting discrepancies, within only ten working days. Considering the tremendously large number of people and housing units and the complexity of their composition in large cities like New York City, it is almost impossible to review thoroughly census counts within two weeks. To make the Local Review Program work as it was intended to work, local officers should be given at least twenty working days. Since the Census Bureau plans to expand computer automation of several parts of the coverage improvement programs, the Bureau will be able to allow local governments to have more time for more fruitful participation.

B. Counting Population in Group Quarters (Special Places) and Counting the Homeless Population

Now, Mr. Chairman, I would like to turn our attention from the improvement of the count of population as a whole to counting populations in special places and the homeless population.

In 1980, persons living in group quarters, not regular housing units, were counted on a complete count basis. Three general categories of persons in group quarters were recognized: first, persons living in institutions, such as mental hospitals, homes for the aged, correctional institutions, and orphanages; second, persons living in non-institutional group quarters, including military barracks, college dormitories, rooming houses, and communes; and third, persons living in missions, flophouses, shelters, railroad stations, etc.

Enumeration of people living in some non-insitutional

group quarters--such as rooming houses, SROs, or SRO-type units--and people thought to have no place of residence or thought to live at several places is extremely difficult. In 1980, two enumeration approaches were implemented for these groups of people.

The first approach was enumeration on "T-night." In the principal effort to count the transient population, on the night before April 1st (called "T-night") packets with two Individual Census Reports (ICRs) and a return envelop were hung on the doors of all rooms at hotels and motels charging $4 or more a night, at YMCAs and YWCAs, and at similar facilities. Persons with no usual home elsewhere or with no one at their usual home to report them were asked to complete the ICRs and mail them to the District Census Office. This approach assumed that these persons were willing and prepared to fill out ICRs and to send them in promptly. As described in my explanation of characteristics of "hard-to-count" populations, many of these people were reluctant, not equipped, and/or not coherent enough to fill out the ICRs properly and then send them in promptly because they were poorly educated, had inadequate language skills, feared the possibility of losing eligibility for government income-transfer programs, feared the possibility of provoking landlords, and/or feared the possibility of their unlawful status as aliens being discovered by the government; thus, the mail-out/mail-back "T-night" approach was not effective in achieving a reasonably complete count of the transient population.

For the 1990 census, the "T-night" survey should be done by interview procedures. Residents in most of these transient units are not all overnight transients. In fact, they tend to stay several weeks or more. With help from government and private agencies, a very small number of transient units, mostly for poor individuals who tend to stay overnight or less than a week or so, can be located. Thus, the enumeration approach is not only technically feasible but also more effective.

Another special enumeration procedure was used in 1980 to count people staying at hotels, motels, flophouses, other transient units charging less than $4 a night, bus and railroad stations, etc. Such places were visited the night of April 8 (called Mission night or "M-night").

The success of the "M-night" effort was almost entirely dependent on locating the people being sought. Thus, for the 1990 census, I recommend close cooperation and coordination with local governments and private groups and

agencies concerned in systematically searching for places where these people stay.

C. Complete Coverage of Housing Units

My testimony to this point has focused on issues related to coverage of population. Now I would like to mention one important issue concerning housing units.

According to the definition of a housing unit used for the 1980 census, a housing unit can be a house, an apartment, a mobile home, or a single room, houseboat, or recreational vehicle, as long as the unit has direct access from outside or through a common place or public hall and has complete plumbing facilities, including the presence of hot and cold running water, a flush toilet, and bathtub or shower facilities. However, units in non-residential buildings were not included in the census, while the (transient) population in such buildings was counted. In fact, a great number of commercial hotels in many central cities are being occupied by poor single individuals and families as affordable housing units in these cities are shrinking rapidly. To assess completely the housing resources available in the country and in many large central cities, all inexpensive commercial hotels, motels, and other transient units--with direct access and complete plumbing facilities, that are mostly for poor individuals and/or families and not for tourists and business travelers--should be included in the 1990 census.

D. Localization of Federal Programs and Federalization of the Decennial Census

Finally, I want to turn to a very important topic: making improvements in the census at local levels as well as at the federal level.

Over the years, severe, drastic budget cuts by the federal government in housing and urban development programs and social welfare programs have forced local governments to assume responsibilities for providing basic, necessary services. Contrary to this trend, changes made in the 1980 census are federal government oriented. In 1980, considerable improvement was made in reducing undercounting of the population at the national level, while undercounting at the local level, particularly in large central cities, was still significantly high, so that many large cities, like New York City, have been substantially deprived of the congressional representation and federal funding to which they are

entitled. The necessary adjustment should be made as soon as possible. For the 1990 census, an approach designed to reduce the undercounting problem in large cities should be emphasized.

Census data on transient populations collected in 1980 were not organized and presented in a way that allowed local governments to use the census as a data source for analyzing and making policies and programs. ICRs from "T-night" places were received and sorted in census district offices. An ICR for a person with no one at home to report him or her was sent first to a central clearinghouse in New Orleans, which then forwarded it to the district office that was in charge of enumerating the area where the person usually lived. The ICR was checked against the questionnaire for the reported address. If the person was not already listed on the questionnaire for that address, the population information for the person was added to the questionnaire. However, the majority of the transient population staying in inexpensive hotels and other transient units tend to stay there a fairly long time and, if they move, their residential movement often tends to be within the same borough only. The ICRs for persons with "no usual home elsewhere" were transcribed onto regular census questionnaires, and the persons were counted where they were staying at the time of enumeration. Thus, census data on the transient population collected and presented in 1980 did not show the actual number of transient people in localities. In 1990, data on all transient nontourists, nonbusiness travelers, the homeless, and homeless-type populations should be counted where these people are found.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my testimony. I sincerely hope that, with your continuous efforts, the 1990 census will be designed to reflect accurately the critically urgent housing problems, which have worsened since 1980, in many large cities like New York City, cities which have been in the process of profound demographic and economic transformations. Such a census will thus enhance federal government officials' understanding of the critical need for significantly larger funds in order to reduce these problems.

THE NEW GRAPES OF WRATH . . .

By Segundo A. Mercado-Llorens
Sheree L. West

(From U.S. Hispanic Affairs)

. . he had already understood that he would never leave that room, for it was forseen that the city of mirrors (or mirages) would be wiped out by the wind and exiled from the memory of men . . . because races condemned to one hundred years of solitude did not have a second opportunity on earth.

— Gabriel Garcia Marquez
"One Hundred Years of Solitude"

Humanity — that quality of mercy, kindness, and sympathy which distinguishes man from beast — is dying. In the endless evolutionary struggle for power between sublimity and hypocrisy, the latter finally seems to have gained the upper hand.

Today, the best national estimates suggest an overall homeless population of 2.5 million to three million people. Moreover, homelessness among minorities (as shown in a recent survey by the Department of Housing and Urban Development) is on the rise. The urban jungle has become an asphalt asylum — the streets teeming with human flotsam. It is a triumph of callousness over concern.

For Hispanics, the issue is particularly troubling given the close and extended family ties that are a hallmark of their culture. Yet, the incidence of Hispanic homelessness remains the untold story of the so-called "era de los Hispanos."

As early as 1982, the New York City Human Resources Administration identified Hispanic homelessness as a major new phenomenon. An HRA survey disclosed that new entrants into the shelter system were increasingly younger and that Hispanics represented over one-quarter of the first-time shelter clients. Most alarming, however, was the finding that the proportion of Hispanics in the shelter population more than doubled between 1979 and 1982, climbing from 11 percent to 26 percent.

The profile that ultimately emerged from that study was of an acculturated group finally showing the strains of decades of poverty and assaults on the spirit. Only 2.9 percent of all entrants were "recent arrivals from Puerto Rico and the Caribbean." The overwhelming number had roots in the city and were much more likely to have been living with their families just before they became homeless, than either whites or blacks.

Maria Elena Girone, regional executive director of The Puerto Rican Family Institute, notes that "In general, the Hispanic homeless individual tends to be very young, while the families tend to be middle-aged. A high percentage of the Hispanic homeless are female heads of households, and close behind are unemployed males ranging in age from 18 to 45 — what should be our most productive age group."

"But we shouldn't think that families just decide all of a sudden not to support a family member," argues Girone. "An individual may become homeless as a result of other pressures — peer pressures, environmental pressures and the like — which are a product of the clash of two cultures. Second- and third-generation Hispanics, after all, have acquired a set of

values which sometimes come into conflict with nuclear family values."

"Yet," she concludes, "because Hispanic homelessness is essentially a condition compounded by other elements, such as a lack of employment and an inadequate education, the scarcity of services to deal with the emotional, financial, and other pressures on the family also contributes to family disintegration."

A recent report by the New York State Department of Social Services (DSS) confirms the economic deracination of the Hispanic family. Startlingly, it concludes that homeless families are three times more likely to be Hispanic than white.

The roots of the current crisis are clear. They lie in laissez-faire government policy, rather than in the effects of social pathology or personal mismanagement. Federal cutbacks in housing programs, a drastic decline in single-room occupancy hotels (47 percent nationwide and 87 percent in New York City between 1970 and 1982), co-op/condo conversions and skyrocketing rent increases depleted the number of affordable units. An escalating poverty rate, an insufficient public-assistance allowance, and a new form of deinstitutionalization — that process by which the mentally ill were pushed out of state hospitals in the '50s, '60s and '70s — also combined to create this modern-day "harvest of shame."

The failures of deinstitutionalization, for example, are well known. Between 1955 and 1981, approximately 434,000 state and county hospital patients across the country were "dumped" into communities that were ill-equipped to serve them. They began to appear on the streets, huddled in hallways and subways and the emergency rooms of municipal hospitals. The legacy of that policy, despite claims to the contrary, still plays a part in this urban drama.

As Ellen Baxter, who has studied the problem for the Community Service Society, puts it: "Today, the process has slowed down, but only on paper. Often you'll hear mental health officials saying that deinstitutionalization has been discontinued. But what they fail to say is that they are not admitting anyone into the state hospitals. So that by restricting access, they are in effect continuing to leave people who are mentally ill and homeless, with no option but to go into the streets or into a shelter."

"In addition, because the public hospitals such as Bellevue, Metropolitan, or Harlem — which have lots of mentally ill homeless persons in their emergency rooms — are under no obligation to find housing, the patients get discharged into the streets. It's a very explicit policy which says, 'go back to your street corner or go back to wherever you came from. You've been stabilized now.' "

But the recent and dramatic growth in the figures for the homeless cannot be explained by this "locking out" of the mentally ill. And for the Hispanic homeless, the answers are more complex.

"Part of it," says one Hispanic social worker, "is the length of time the family has been here. They become more Americanized, and they adopt a lot of American values, such as the notion of fending for yourself."

"Then there is the problem that Hispanic families, many of which came from the Dominican Republic or Central and South America, can no longer absorb all of the incoming immigrants. They brought part of the family over first, and then they started bringing the oldest kids and found that there was no more room in the apartment, and no other apartment to which they could afford to move. That's one reason why there are a lot of young Hispanic homeless."

According to statistics compiled by the National Coalition for the Homeless (NCH), children under the age of 16 now outnumber single adults in New York's shelter system. One factor that may account for this is the estimated

100,000 New York City families who are forced to double and triple up in order to compensate for the annual loss to deterioration of 22,000 housing units a year.

Says Dan Salerno, a researcher for NCH, "Some may argue that these people are not really homeless, but when the tension level reaches the point that friction forces one to move out, that family becomes homeless."

At one city-funded shelter we encountered the Gonzalez family. They have been homeless for over one year. With Antonio unemployed and unable to meet the cost of rent for their one-bedroom apartment in the Bronx, his wife, Miriam, talked her sister, Carmen, into providing temporary quarters for themselves and their three children. But, following the departure of Carmen's husband after a long and bitter dispute, the Gonzalezes were ordered to leave the apartment.

Antonio remembers that "it happened from one day to the next. She threatened to call the police on us unless we left. This was in Co-Op City, and if management had found out that we were staying there, she would have been evicted. So we had to leave."

"After that, we went to my sister's place on Walton Avenue in the Bronx. She had a one-bedroom apartment, and a handicapped baby and her husband living with her. We slept on the living room floor. There were so many roaches I had to sleep with one eye open, and once in a while we'd find them crawling all over our kids."

"On top of that, my sister's husband liked to scream at my children, even though I don't even scream at them. It seemed like he had caught an attitude. We couldn't communicate, and it got to the point where I said, 'No more!' "

The family friction experienced by the Gonzalezes, however, is a symptom, not a cause, of the burgeoning crisis.

The HUD and DSS studies mentioned above both point to the phenomenon of a recession-induced homelessness, accounting for the additional number of people seeking shelter. HUD notes that between 35 percent and 40 percent of the total surveyed are the working poor who lost their jobs in the aftermath of the economic downturn. DSS affirms this, saying that the shelter population increasingly consists of people "whose only handicap is poverty."

Wilfredo, for example, is a 50-year-old Puerto Rican resident in one of the city-run shelters. He has been there since Christmas. He bears a chisled face and heavy-hooded eyes from which emerge the first stirrings of a frantic fear — like that of a man whose soul has absorbed too many doses of reality. He appears both anxious and expectant. Dry with wit and languor. A man of desiccated passions.

He first came to New York in 1957. He has held a number of low-paying jobs that required a variety of skills. Some were even supervisory positions. Today, however, despite 30 years of employment experience, he finds himself out of a job, out of luck, and homeless.

Although he has three brothers and a sister who also live in the city, they are no longer sources of comfort. He tried living with them, but, he says, "It's not like in the old days anymore. Nowadays, you're expected to take care of your own thing. You can't be a burden. They all have the same problems. Why should you be another one?"

"Since I don't have my own place, and I'm not working, it's like I'm from a different planet. Like an outcast. But, I don't blame them, 'cause money's tight. There aren't any jobs here, and in Puerto Rico it's worse. So if I can't afford it, they must be going through the same thing."

"There used to be a balance, you know. Everybody had a little bit to share. But not now, not since the changing of the guard."

Nationally, the changing of the guard has meant that more than a half-million additional Hispanic individuals slipped below the poverty line

between 1981 and 1983, a percentage increase (14.4 percent) which outstripped increases for both blacks (7.8 percent) and whites (11.2 percent). In addition, an analysis of census data conducted by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities shows that in the first year of the Reagan program alone (1982), the real after-tax income of Hispanics fell by nearly $2 billion, an average loss of $460 a year for every Hispanic household in the nation.

But the holes in the safety net at the federal level have not dampened the spirit of community at the local level.

For Peter Bonachea, a Hispanic housing developer with a firm belief in the ideals of the "American Dream," it has meant the commitment of private monies in the service of public needs. He has spent approximately $100,000 of his personal funds on the acquisition of a residence for homeless individuals sponsored by the Committee for the Heights/Inwood Homeless (CHIH), a community group in New York's Washington Heights.

With little expectation of profit, Bonachea is nonetheless moved by the necessity of the undertaking.

"As Hispanics, we have an obligation to help those of us who have not been so fortunate," he says, "and this is something I believe in. Otherwise, I would not have done it."

Dora Rodriguez, a case manager with the Columbia University Community Services Project, which provides assistance to CHIH, refers to this pilot project as "an alternative SRO." As she describes it, "we call it an alternative because it is being done by a not-for-profit organization, and because the tenants will assist in the building's management. There will also be mental health and social services, in addition to a jobs program, and all of this will be a part of a collective decision-making process."

As explained by Bonachea, this enterprise would never have gotten off the ground without the public-sector funding made available by city and state authorities.

"The juicy part of the whole enterprise," he notes, "is the low-interest loans and grants that CHIH received, because without it the project could not fly."

An unabashed admirer of President Reagan, Bonachea concludes that some housing subsidies are still necessary. "After all," he says, "needs exist, and you cannot just all of a sudden cut this like a waterline and turn off the whole concept. So while there have been cuts in housing funds, I can't believe it's all going to be totally eliminated."

But, in some cases, that is exactly what the President has sought to do. In his first four years, he virtually eliminated every federal program to build or rehabilitate housing for low-income households. The second term appears to offer more of the same.

According to the Low Income Housing Information Service, Reagan's initial proposed budget for fiscal 1986 called for the elimination of the Housing Development Program, which funds new construction and rehabilitation of rental housing units, as well as the termination of Urban Development Action grants and the rural housing programs of the Farmers Home Administration.

The budget axe slashed all funding for additional assisted housing units of any kind. Section 8 funds to support new construction or rehabilitation of rental units, Section 8 rent subsidies for existing units, new construction for the elderly and handicapped under the Section 202 program, and new public housing units were all cut to zero.

If that budget submission is adopted, net new budget authority for housing will have been reduced by 98.3 percent from fiscal 1981 to fiscal 1986. Ironically, although affordable housing heads nearly everyone's list of recommendations for the homeless, housing cuts already total more than all other low-income cuts combined.

Other reasonable recommendations

have also been relegated to the bin of bureaucracy. Interviews with both municipal and private shelter administrators indicate that New York City's Human Resources Administration has largely ignored its own advice (contained in a 1982 report) for the establishment of "referral linkages to agencies specializing in family and employment counseling for Hispanics, especially young Hispanics."

For Maria Girone, this comes as no surprise. "We should remember," she argues, "that Hispanics still have only a minimal impact at the managerial and planning stages. And if you don't have persons at upper governmental levels that are sensitive to the unique needs of our population, this lack of concern will translate into increasing homelessness among Hispanics."

The real safety-net solutions to this economic black hole into which Hispanics are falling constitute no mystery.

Advocates for the homeless contend that housing must be seen as a human right entitled to protection from the vagaries of the private market. They stress the need for a renewed federal commitment to low-income housing production and rehabilitation for the estimated 7 million American households that cannot now afford decent housing.

Housing experts such as Chester Hartman, a fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies, have suggested abandoning the traditional mortgage system in favor of one-time government capital grants. This approach, it is claimed, would halve monthly housing costs.

Creative partnerships, like the Washington Heights SRO project, which combine private developers' expertise in construction and syndication financing with the experience of non-profit community organizations in service delivery, are a new means of self-help housing assistance which, reformers argue, should also be facilitated by government.

In New York state, the Homeless Housing Assistance Program (HHAP) is one initiative designed to encourage this kind of development. However, its ultimate success is still viewed with caution.

As Steven Coe, executive director of Community Access Inc., a non-profit housing and advocacy group, tells us, "There's a lot of smoke, but not a whole lot of fire yet. A lot of groups have applied for and gotten grants. But it remains to be seen if the projects actually get built. Some people in government would like to see us struggle along on a year-to-year basis."

"Yet," he continues, "unless government maintains grant programs like HHAP for a period of years so that a knowledge base develops, what you'll be left with is what you have now — inexperienced funders and inexperienced housing developers — a perfect combination for nothing to happen."

Innovative policies such as Housing Trust Funds (targeted to the low-income housing sector and funded by contributions from office, commercial, and luxury market developers), anti-displacement legislation (to aid the 2½ million Americans who are displaced or evicted annually), and anti-speculation taxes to penalize the profiteers of the quick buy and sell have been proposed as weapons in the long-term fight to prevent homelessness.

Increased allocations for AFDC, SSI, and Home Relief, as well as job training and placement programs, are other measures advanced by concerned groups and individuals.

However, no one is naive enough to believe that all that can be done by the public sector, will be done.

Says Girone: "Programs for the Hispanic community have been created only because we, as Hispanics,

have pushed for them, not because politicians have wanted them."

And given the current political and economic climate, it is doubtful whether sufficient clout can be mustered on behalf of a homeless constituency whose numbers are not easily translated into votes. Nevertheless, doing nothing now may raise the economic stakes in the future to unacceptable levels. Higher crime and school dropout rates, as we have already learned in this country, carry long-term consequences that are not easily resolved.

In the final analysis, therefore, after all the proposals are written, social and economic studies distilled, committee meetings held, speeches delivered, and consultants paid, the most telling advice to our political leaders will remain that which we heard from a resident of a city-run shelter in Brooklyn, who told us quite simply, "Tell them to care."

POSTSCRIPT

Those enclaves of poverty we visited, called shelters, remind us of the two faces of Janus, that Roman god of beginnings and endings. For in those phalanxes of the new conservative order, many will have to start their lives all over again. Others are already lost, the look of resignation — that creeping rigor mortis of the terminal — in their eyes. It is a hell into which any one of us might also have fallen, a human abatoir with the stench of politics in the air, where the fissure in the American Dream, meets the hole in the safety net.

Some of the residents clothe themselves in sleep. There is dread in the heart, and fear in the blood. America has muddied its hallowed ground. It is a bloody boudoir stacked with a collection of outcasts, slumbering in the crowded intimacy of chaos.

Peter Bonachea, Dora Rodriguez, Ellen Baxter, and those like them are buffers between salvation and sorrow. Others, such as the political caciques who have permitted homelessness to happen, are merely consumed by the hypodermic of high fashion. Their zeal for fairness as transitory as the fix of publicity. Yet, homelessness is the thin edge of the precipice, where society prepares to make its final leap into the void. And all of us should be aware that only the most committed can stop it.

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The authors wish to note that the names of homeless people described in this article have been changed to protect their privacy.